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Daily Report

Central Eurasia

FBIS-SOV-96-097
Friday
17 May 1996

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Russia: FBIS Presidential Election Report 16 May

WA1605214896

[FBIS Report] ***This is the fifth in a weekly series of reports FBIS is producing on Russian regional developments in the campaign for the 16 June presidential election. It is based solely on Russian media reporting from Moscow and provincial sources (see note 1).***

(Note 1) FBIS receipt of some Russian local media sources via mail accounts for the dated nature of certain items cited. This FBIS media note presents the local media in the timeliest manner possible, given procurement constraints.

Yeltsin Woos 13 Big City Mayors During a 10 May ferry ride down the Volga River following a major campaign appearance in Volgograd the previous day, Yeltsin met with the mayors of 13 of Russia's largest cities—Chelyabinsk, Krasnoyarsk, Nizhniy Novgorod, Kazan, Perm, Omsk, Rostov-na-Donu, Samara, Saratov, Ufa, Volgograd, Voronezh, and Yekaterinburg. According to a 10 May ITAR-TASS report, Yeltsin told the mayors that big cities are the foundation of Russia's reforms and spoke of the need to "establish contact" between the federal executive branch and mayors of cities to "promote the development of local self-government." Praising Moscow Mayor Yuriy Luzhkov, Yeltsin urged the mayors to use Luzhkov's example and attract more domestic and foreign investment—mentioning China in particular, according to INTERFAX (10 May)—to their cities to "boost production." Noting that there is "much trouble" in the defense sector, Yeltsin invited the mayors to take part in a proposed "large-scale conference" with directors from the military-industrial complex and government ministers overseeing defense-related industries (INTERFAX, 10 May).

Yeltsin's Campaign Largesse Questioned In the wake of Yeltsin's recent flurry of campaign trips to the provinces, Moscow's NOVAYA GAZETA-PONEDELNIK (6 May) has questioned the legitimacy of several of the president's promises to voters in the hinterland and whether these costly promises will be fulfilled from Yeltsin's private campaign coffers or from taxpayers' pockets. Noting that Yeltsin had claimed a 1995 salary of 26,784,596 rubles in his candidate registration forms, that the Central Electoral Commission allots each candidate 150 million rubles, and allowing approximately 4 billion rubles more in "private" donations, the paper raised doubts about various "hand outs" Yeltsin gave during his provincial forays. The paper cited in particular Yeltsin's 3 May visit to Yaroslavl during which he pledged 100 million rubles for the construction of a Muslim center and 10 billion rubles for new buildings for the local military finance college. Asserting that the "gesture" would have been "generous but justified" if made in his capacity as head of state, the paper questioned how such projects could be financed from Yeltsin's "small" campaign fund.

While not addressing how such projects will be funded, the presidential Administration newspaper ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI (6 May) lamented that Yeltsin is "having a hard time" on his provincial visits because "everyone is trying to exploit the electoral situation to ask for as much as possible from the head of state." The paper asserted that if Yeltsin is "met on each of his trips by people with outstretched hands, it will be hard for him to carry out all the decisions he is making on the hoof." However, ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI offered some reassurance, claiming that Yeltsin "is not a man who is afraid of taking responsibility. And that policy has always brought him victory."

Yeltsin Campaign Materials Stolen From Sakhalin Newspaper ITAR-TASS and KURANTY (13 May) reported that thieves broke into the premises of the Far Eastern weekly newspaper SVOBODNIY SAKHALIN on the night of 10 May and stole computer equipment and software, including campaign materials promoting Yeltsin that were to be published on 20 May. Citing "political reasons" as the likely motive for the theft, SVOBODNIY SAKHALIN chief editor Petr Lyakutin told ITAR-TASS that local businessmen "urgently supplied" the newspaper with computers and software, and that Yeltsin's campaign material will be published "late in May."

Yeltsin's Regional Support Questioned Murmansk's POLYARNAYA PRAVDA has taken numerous swipes at Yeltsin's campaign, claiming that his support in the regions is overstated. A 20 March article alleged that Yeltsin's support groups in the region are manipulated by Moscow and do not reflect support among the oblast's population. The article also claimed that the Yeltsin forces may have resorted to "administrative terror" during the collection of signatures for his nomination. The article said some enterprises were "forcing people to sign" in support of Yeltsin, and it characterized the collection of 11,500 signatures at the region's Oktyabrskaya Railroad, "where approximately 12,000 persons are employed," as "suspicious." The article concluded that "one cannot get rid of the feeling" that Yeltsin's supposed support in the regions is a mirage created by Yeltsin's "well-developed support network."

New Pro-Yeltsin Supplement "NE DAY BOG" Creates Backlash In Murmansk POLYARNAYA PRAVDA also lashed out at the supplement NE DAY BOG and other leaflets being distributed in the regions, saying

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such measures may be hardening anti-Yeltsin sentiment in some provinces. A 26 April article railed against NE DAY BOG, an anti-communist supplement being distributed with PREZIDENT, the publication of Yeltsin's support group in Moscow, calling the supplement an "insolent violation of the Law on the Press, which requires one to indicate" a publication's "founders, circulation, and registration number." It continued that "from now on, until 16 June, 51,000 persons throughout the oblast will be receiving this 'present' weekly from an unknown donor." It concluded by advising what it called the "outraged" inhabitants of Murmansk to recall that according to all laws, past and present, "anonymous works are sent to the garbage can without being read. So—send yours [to the garbage]. After all, the postmen will not stop: their orders are from the top! Even from the very throne [of the president]!"

The POLYARNAYA PRAVDA article also harshly criticized Yabloko's campaign tactics, claiming that the Yavlinskiy campaign had initiated "the first anonymous agitation" in Murmansk. The paper charged that the campaign "burst" into the region with leaflets and posters, one of which demanded that the voters "guess the surname of the future president of Russia." The leaflet hints that the new president is "younger than 50 years of age, has an economic education, experience in state government, knows foreign languages, and does not have vices harmful to the country"—a jab at Yeltsin's alcoholism.

Novosibirsk Paper Predicts Groundswell of Support for Yeltsin The Novosibirsk newspaper SOVETSKAYA SIBIR (24 April), claiming that Zyuganov's support is "frozen" at its February levels, asserted that Yeltsin is "rapidly scoring points" by gaining "new strata of the electorate" in the regions. The article claims that Yeltsin's support has grown by a factor of 2.5 "in the past six weeks" while Zyuganov's support has plateaued because of "problems" in the regions. According to the article, the regions have attained leeway for independent development under Yeltsin, while the communists only pay "lip service to a federation" and if elected would recentralize "management of all federal resources" slated for the components. The article praised Yeltsin for "considerably altering the balance of forces in regional politics" and predicted a "sharp growth of his influence" in the regions.

Yavlinskiy Stresses Social Programs in Novosibirsk Interview During an interview published in Novosibirsk's NOVAYA SIBIR (21 March), Yabloko leader Grigoriy Yavlinskiy highlighted Yabloko's social program and asserted that "the elimination of poverty" through the "creation of a middle class" would be his "main objective" as president. Yavlinskiy highlighted Yabloko's "Nizhniy Novgorod Prologue," a 1992 program which reportedly comprises "many projects" aimed at social support in that oblast. Yavlinskiy further claimed Boris Nemtsov's December 1995 election as governor of Nizhniy Novgorod Oblast with 66 percent of the vote in the first round was the result of oblast voters' positive assessment of Yabloko's social support measures. He predicted that on 16 June the Russian people will not engage in "negative voting" as they did in the December 1995 State Duma elections and that "the citizens will not choose for themselves a bad tsar merely because they do not care for the present tsar."

Irkutsk Political Scientist Supports Yeltsin To Preserve the Political System Viktor Dyatlov, identified as a "well-known Irkutsk political scientist," urged Russians to use their 16 June vote to preserve Russia's democratic development by voting for Yeltsin, according to an interview published in Irkutsk's VOSTOCHNO-SIBIRSKAYA PRAVDA (8 May). He claimed that Russia's "new political system, a system of representative democracy, is still very embryonic, has not yet taken root, is operating inadequately, and is very easily gotten rid of." He sees "no realistic counterweight to Yeltsin"— "powerful" and "strong" with "a giant amount of experience." In contrast, he characterized Yavlinskiy as "a likable person," but said he "has never directed anything in his life." He added that a vote for Yeltsin is "a hope that in four years I can vote" for another candidate who will build on Russia's young democracy, while, if the Communists come to power, "we will hardly have a choice at the next ballot." He concluded that "a vote for Yeltsin means the possibility of the next elections."

Russia: Yeltsin, Yavlinskiy Discuss Political, Economic Situation

LD1605182596 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1743 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 16 (Interfax) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Yabloko leader Grigoriy Yavlinskiy had a meeting in the Kremlin Thursday [16 May]. Yeltsin press secretary Sergey Medvedev said the two men, both candidates in the June presidential elections, discussed the political and economic situation in the country, the activities of the Yabloko group in the State Duma and the presidential race.

Sources told INTERFAX that Yeltsin and Yavlinskiy discussed Yavlinskiy's platform which was given to Yeltsin at their first meeting earlier in May.

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Yeltsin made remarks on the platform and told Yavlinskiy of certain items in his own platform which are similar to Yavlinskiy's ideas, the sources say.

Yeltsin was confident that the Chechen problem could be resolved only through talks involving the Russian government, the separatists and the pro-Moscow government in Groznyy. He said that he will promote such talks when he visits the Chechen republic shortly.

Yeltsin and Yavlinskiy were also reported to discuss the proposals made by another presidential candidate, Svyatoslav Fedorov, that a coalition government of all most influential political groups be set up in Russia.

Russia: Yavlinskiy Comments on Second Meeting With Yeltsin

LD1605213196 Moscow NTV in Russian 2000 GMT 16 May 96

[Ivan Volonikhin video report of presidential candidate Grigoriy Yavlinskiy on 16 May; place not given; from the "Segodnya" newscast — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Announcer Aleksandr Kara-Murza] Yabloko leader Grigoriy Yavlinskiy had a one-on-one meeting this afternoon with the Russian president. Our correspondent Ivan Volonikhin was one of the correspondents patiently waiting for the results of the audience.

[Volonikhin] Yabloko leader Grigoriy Yavlinskiy told correspondents about the results of his second conversation with Russian President Boris Yeltsin. According to Yavlinskiy, the president had analyzed very carefully the points of the Yabloko leader's manifesto, which he had given Yeltsin at their first meeting in May.

[Yavlinskiy] The president said he agreed with my proposals, which are very serious ones: For example, very wide-ranging personnel reshuffles, issues relating to limitations on presidential power, and observing the balance of powers. He also touched on the fact that he is ready to agree to direct negotiations on the Chechen crisis with the separatists, which is indeed very important.

Another important thing was that he in effect said that he has no objections to make to the account of the economic program proposed to him, and that he considers very profound adjustments of policy to be necessary.

[Volonikhin] Regarding possible personnel reshuffles in the government and in Yeltsin's immediate entourage, Yavlinskiy said that his proposals had mentioned those individuals whose resignation had always been fundamentally important for the democratic opposition.

[Yavlinskiy] We have named them before: The prime minister, the defense minister, the first deputy prime minister, and a number of others.

[Unidentified correspondent] Excuse me, but by the first deputy prime minister you mean Oleg Soskovets?

[Yavlinskiy] Yes.

[Correspondent] Yavlinskiy voiced his satisfaction at the shifts in presidential policies in the direction that the democratic public thinks to be the correct one — but with the proviso, Yavlinskiy said, that these proposals do not remain on paper.

The Yabloko leader also announced that he did not intend to drop out of the presidential election campaign, and therefore the question that he might take the post of prime minister was not discussed at all during his conversation with Yeltsin.

By mutual agreement, information about the meeting will be published in the press in the very near future.

Russia: Yeltsin Voices Confidence of Victory at Elections

LD1705102996 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0940 GMT 17 May 96

[By Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 17 (Itar-Tass) — "The June presidential elections in Russia are to decide the strategic course of the Russian State's further development," President Boris Yeltsin told the Krasnoyarsk Television and Broadcasting Company today.

"You must understand that we shall actually be choosing not a President — not Yeltsin or Zyuganov — but the future of Russia, its ability to be a great and competitive power in this world not by word of mouth but in actual reality," Yeltsin pointed out. "I do not intend to lose this future, and I do not doubt the people's support, their wisdom and common sense," he added.

Asked whether he could "lose the June presidential elections", the President said he would "not surrender our strategic, democratic position". Much of the interview, which the Krasnoyarsk Television showed today, was devoted to Siberian problems, because Yeltsin is to leave today for a working visit to Krasnoyarsk Territory and Omsk Region.

The President said in this connection that "many splendid words were said about Siberia, but no words can fully disclose its importance for Russia".

Both as President and as an ordinary Russian citizen Yeltsin assesses the importance of Siberia in the

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same way: "Its importance cannot be overestimated". He pointed out that "today we must approach the development of Siberia in a new way, meaning that it should be rational, thrifty, not rapacious, and, finally, more advantageous for the people inhabiting its territory".

Speaking of the hopes which he pins on the Siberians, Yeltsin stressed that "always typical for them were such qualities as industriousness and initiative". "The Siberians," the President said, "are courageous and bold trailblazers. The famous Siberian character had developed on the basis of those qualities."

Therefore, Yeltsin does not doubt that "Siberia's industrial and human potential will quickly put the Siberians in the lead of Russian business". "The Siberians must have their very weighty say in the Russian reforms," Yeltsin stressed.

Touching on a very important problem for Siberia — the rapacious use of its natural resources, particularly typical for the period of Soviet rule — Yeltsin stressed that the first step to overcome such negative practices was already made.

"We have rid ourselves of the ideological dogmas, of the arbitrary treatment of nature," the President noted. "In a democratic society the public is able to control the actions of the authorities, including in the sphere of nature. Such democratic institutions as freedom of the press and television are already playing a far from insignificant role in public control over all the aspects of our life," he stressed.

Yeltsin said that a democratic society should be governed by the law, that the law and only the law should govern all the activities in this or that sphere within it.

"This is also the best means for protecting the environment and wisely using the natural wealth," he noted, adding that it was impermissible to stop the broad enlightenment effort to inform the people on the need to take proper care of nature, which should be exerted at all levels — from schools to ministries.

Speaking about relations between the Krasnoyarsk Territory and the Federal Centre, Yeltsin stressed the need of developing the mechanism of budget federalism. "It is yet in the making," he said, "and, of course, there are still shortcomings within the system of relations between the federal and local budgets, shortcomings within the system of taxation".

"We know about these shortcomings," Yeltsin added, "and are consistently working to eliminate them". "At the same time," the President stressed, "Krasnoyarsk Territory has actually no grounds to complain against the Federal Centre. All the federal budget's debts for wages have been paid." He noted that "the debt linked with the financing of the defence order and for wages to teachers will be liquidated at the end of May".

At the same time, Yeltsin admitted that there were, of course, certain problems in Krasnoyarsk Territory. For instance, the cost of public services has grown, as well as housing rent, and fares for urban and suburban transport services. "However," Yeltsin stressed, "it is hardly correct to blame the President and the Government for the untimely payment of wages to rural teachers or for badly organised family leisure."

Russia: Yeltsin's Current Rating Said Not Enough To Win Election

LD1705114496 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1138 GMT 17 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] UFA, May 17 (Interfax-Eurasia) — President Yeltsin's pre-election rating today is 28-30 percent, which is not enough for a victory, Yeltsin campaign manager Sergey Filatov told a conference of Yeltsin supporters in Ufa.

He confessed that Russian voters' attitude to Yeltsin was mixed: 20 regions having a population of 40 million supported the incumbent, however, about 40 regions with a population of 50 million were opposed to him. Filatov said that some regions were strongly pro-Communist and reforms there had been stalled. He mentioned the Tambov and Novosibirsk regions as pro-Communist citadels.

Filatov said that the hope for a democratic coalition on the eve of the presidential election still remained. At the same time he said that if no agreement was achieved with democratically-minded candidates, "the voters should by all means choose Yeltsin as the sole realistic alternative to Gennadiy Zyuganov."

Filatov said that the question of what road Russia would choose loomed before the country. He warned that society was split along political lines, the situation was reminiscent of 1991 and 1993 and the chief aim today was to prevent civil war.

Russia: Zyuganov Interviewed on 'Elections-96' Program

LD1705085896 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 0450 GMT 17 May 96

[Interview with presidential contender Gennadiy Zyuganov by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given; from the "Elections-96" program — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [video shows Zyuganov and interviewer sitting on a bench in a public park; film

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of people looking after children] [Zyuganov] We have come to a point beyond which we will be deprived of our country, our motherland. There will be total extinction, destruction, de-skilling, drinking, expulsion of our citizens from the Far East and North, lands which have belonged to us for centuries! There are 6 million refugees in Russia already.

On the other hand, I know history well. I have studied the history of my people, which spans thousands of years. There have been moments when we stood at the edge of a precipice, about to be engulfed into the depths. However, we lifted ourselves up, stood up, and were reborn. I am absolutely convinced that we will be reborn again.

Now people are beginning to see more clearly. What we need is the will to unite. I can see scores of respected and talented people joining our ranks — writers, actors, journalists, scientists, teachers, and doctors. They understand that the future of our country is at stake.

Two real forces are fighting now: those who love their country and those who are prepared to sell it off or lease it out cheap in order to fill their pockets. That is the long and the short of it. I am sure that we will be able to put the economy back on track. Our land is still there, our factories have not been completely ripped apart, we are rich in natural resources and our survival skills are amazing. We have all conditions for a normal life and work. No one wants to close the door either to the West or to the East.

[Correspondent] Foreign correspondents give the impression that people and politicians in the West are less frightened of communists coming to power than we are in this country.

[Zyuganov] In fact, it does not frighten them at all. They are afraid of instability. They have had meetings everywhere — in Paris, Bonn, Davos, Strasbourg, Delhi, Beijing, and Tokyo. Investments are flowing into the communist China — over 130 billion [currency not specified] already. We have had only 5 billion. I ask why this is so. Your prices change every month, they say; there is no predictability, we do not know whether we can use the profits, and racketeering is rife. That is why they will welcome any government which will stick to the rules of the game, to a stable and normal environment, because there are about $200 billion in the world available for investment every year. Capital needs to be invested. Southeast Asia is the most profitable area for investment, but the market is folding and shrinking there.

Our great expanse, talented people, skilled work force and huge resources hold great promise; that is why investment will be attracted. You need have no worry about that. It is one thing to use your invested money for the war in Chechnya, for drinking and stealing. But if, on the other hand, you take the money and invest it in best technologies which will work for your children and grandchildren and which will make a fabulous return, that is a completely different ball game. We believe that some 700 best technologies invented by our scientists and specialists should be introduced as soon as possible, ensuring our breakthrough into the 21st century. Some time ago Japan made use of our technologies of extracting and processing metals — furnace-free processing for example — then it moved 20 to 30 years ahead of other countries.

We have a similar chance now, incidentally, if we do not repeat what has already been done or use obsolete equipment. We must look for new technologies and introduce them. How can we achieve this? How can we make sure that a worker goes about his business, works, invents, or builds? How have we fallen so low that a very rich country is unable to pay a pittance of a wage even to the old, to the disabled, to teachers and doctors? Whose fault is it, and what should be done today, tomorrow, and the day after?

These are natural, normal questions. I have this gut feeling that we should achieve this through peace and kindness, and it makes me feel good. We have been saying for a long time that we are prepared to sit at the negotiating table with anyone who cherishes peace in Russia and prosperity in each family. We will talk to the government, to the president, to any political force.

Ensuring stability is a political objective. However, stability should have a foundation — whether it be respect for the country's history and its working people, respect for the policy of the majority, respect for democratic elections, at which citizens should be able to rectify the situation and elect a political force of their choice. Elections are about coming to the polls and putting your ballot paper in the box. All other forces should sign a pact to say that they will submit themselves to the will and the choice of the people. We are prepared to abide strictly by these rules.

We must do everything to ensure that the elections are honest. That is why it is important that we have our representatives — five to seven people — at every polling station. We must make sure that the boxes are sealed properly, that they do not have two or three false bottoms, and that thousands of pre-filled ballot papers have not been deposited there already. We should also be present at the vote count and receive a copy of the minutes. Simultaneously, we can do our own fast vote count and publish those minutes in the morning.

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Even if they manage to rig them the day after, we can compare them and say who added what, and then we will be talking about criminal responsibility. So, the preparations for and conduct of the elections calls for great involvement of our citizens.

[Correspondent] Imagine you have won the election and have come to power. Do you not think that sabotage might begin in the country?

[Zyuganov] Whoever wins these elections will wear a crown of thorns. He will need to be very determined and very professional — that is the main thing. Today half the country is already at a standstill. It is hard to imagine worse sabotage. If a handful of people continue to enrich themselves beyond belief, while 80 percent are losing all they have, their savings, jobs, and confidence, nobody will be able to keep the country in check. That is why everyone who has not yet lost the sense of responsibility is interested in seeing the bloc of national and patriotic forces in power, because it has a serious program and a professional team. We must together rebuild rather than sabotage the country, otherwise we will lose it.

[Correspondent] However, most people who have not yet made their choice are worried whether you will not turn the country back if you come to power.

[Zyuganov] Such allegations are speculative. Many of those who are now in the Kremlin used to be members of the CPSU. However, in our bloc the absolute majority are not former members of the CPSU. These are the people who are faithful to eternal values, to good, to justice, to humanism, and to truth, and who are fighting for these values. These speculations about moving back or forward are also not serious. We have rolled back almost four centuries as far as our territory is concerned. Now the border of our state is near Smolensk, where it was at the time of Ivan IV. As to living standards, our consumption has fallen by half. Look at the economy: it is idle and destroyed; it is in a worse state than after the war. Crime and banditry are the same as after the civil war. On the other hand, as a professional and a philosopher I understand all too well that one can only move forward. Even if tomorrow everyone were to vote to go back, nothing would come of it.

There were serious reasons for the destruction of the country and the fall of the CPSU. We have thought them over and decided that the reason was the monopoly on power, on truth, and on property. The top rotted as a result, betraying its friends and allies, its country, and its entrepreneurs. Now it is still betraying them right, left, and center. We want to move forward, looking into the 21st century. We must develop and multiply the best assets we have inherited. This means, first of all, respect of all languages, peoples, and cultures. This is what singles out my approach to building relations with anyone I meet.

I hope the citizens of the country will support the bloc of national patriotic forces, because it is based on Russia's supreme values, its statehood, and the great power of its spirit.

Russia: CPRF Leaders Deny Zyuganov Made Anti-Party Statements

MK1605125196 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 16 May 96 p 3

[Report by Natalya Kalashnikova: "Regarding Comrade Zyuganov's Anti-Party Utterances. The Communist Leader Fails To Pass Exam on the Party Rules"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gennadiy Zyuganov, head of the CPRF [Communist Party of the Russian Federation], who has repeatedly shocked both Moscow and the foreign public by fairly contradictory utterances regarding his presidential plans, appears to have reserved the key sensation for a provincial audience. According to the INTERFAX news agency, the AMURSKAYA PRAVDA newspaper published an interview with the presidential hopeful, suggesting that he has distanced himself not only from his most notorious party comrades, but from the party as such.

It follows from the interview that in the event of his victory in the election Zyuganov is not going to do everything "Kuptsov, Makashov, and the other odious personalities of the CPRF ruling clique" may order him to do. Moreover, Zyuganov stressed that "the party rules do not apply to the rights and duties of the president of the country." That is, as president he will be able to consider himself absolutely free from any current CPRF program tenets. Before asking the rhetorical question of exactly whom those who have, until this moment, considered themselves to be part of Zyuganov's electorate will vote for under the circumstances — a representative of the CPRF, a candidate of the bloc of "the left patriotic forces" or for the independent candidate Zyuganov — KOMMERSANT-DAILY correspondents have turned to members of the CPRF's Duma faction for comments.

In the view of Vladimir Semago, Communist-cum-entrepreneur, "Gena [Zyuganov] would never have done anything like that!" Party ideologist Igor Bratishchev conceded that the faction even discussed at its latest meeting the press campaign to play up an alleged split in the CPRF leadership. Aleksey Podberezkin, deputy chief of Zyuganov's electoral headquarters, explained to your KOMMERSANT-DAILY correspondent that the interview emerged because of journalists' negligence.

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As for a split in the party, he dismissed this as "false rumor," even though "there are various views in the faction," but "there is also a core that has historically come about in the party, which keeps the situation under control." Furthermore, "it is Zyuganov's style to convince people very accurately, thoughtfully. If this does not succeed, he readily submits himself."

Valentin Kuptsov, chief of Zyuganov's electoral headquarters, and the main butt of [Zyuganov's] interview, has also responded via INTERFAX. Assessing the interview as "a usual provocation, one of those that run into the thousands," the party's second-ranking man, as he is called in the CPRF, noted: "I am 100-percent certain that Zyuganov did not say that (about odious persons — KOMMERSANT-DAILY)." Generally speaking, "this is a specially devised program to discredit the party leader so as to drive a wedge between the leaders and to sow distrust among rank-and-file members over some intrigue at the top." With regard to the other part of Zyuganov's utterances that have so much aroused public opinion — to the effect that the party rules do not apply to the president — the headquarters' chief noted evasively: "We expected from the outset that Zyuganov would not be a party candidate; he is officially allowed to have his own platform that may differ from that of the party."

What is worth noting here is the clarification that Zyuganov is "officially allowed" to take such liberties; that is, the party discipline, as well as the party rules discarded in the interview, are binding upon Zyuganov — even if he is elected president. There is another snag, however. The bill "On the Procedure for Inaugurating the Newly Elected President of the Russian Federation," whose drafters included the CPRF faction's best brains (yesterday the president sent the draft back to Duma members for finalization), includes a proposal obliging the newly elected president to quit the party of which he may have been a member for the period of his stay in office. The Communists object to this provision. So, arguing that the party rules do not apply to him as president, Zyuganov turns out to have also split with his party comrades over legislative matters.

In the arcane twists of the current political situation — a situation that has come to be determined largely by behind-the-scenes separatist talks — it is not that important any longer whether Zyuganov said the names of his colleagues or whether they sneaked into his interview from the question asked by the interviewer. What is important is the crux of the matter: Gennadiy Andreyevich is eager — this follows from his numerous speeches before foreign audiences, and was confirmed yet another time by the Amur interview — to distance himself from certain comrades of his who complicate the already difficult task of "creating" a social democratic image. Furthermore, currently the CPRF chief has encountered the need to urgently win the sympathies of not only Western investors, but also Russian entrepreneurs and technocrats, who are in short supply in the Communist ranks. Yesterdays' commentary by Zyuganov's partner in the bloc — Sergey Baburin — is direct proof of that. Speaking in another province — Chelyabinsk — Baburin said something that was just as sensational: "A considerable number of professionals who are currently in the Russian government should retain their posts regardless of the outcome of the presidential election. The reason is, that in this body of authority, professionals must take precedence over party preferences." Baburin added, however, that both the government and the president "must change." Evidently, Zyuganov is trying to change, too.

Russia: Zyuganov's Leaked Government Lineup Revealed, Derided

MK1605120996 Moscow MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS in Russian 16 May 96 p 1

[Report by Yekaterina Deyeva and Aleksey Zverev: "A Fresh Politburo: To Serve With Blood. All Top Communists Signed Up for the PND"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Back last December Gennadiy Zyuganov was planning to set up a formidable "people's patriotic front" headed by a single presidential candidate. Of course, no one was fit to become the national leader except Zyuganov himself. But, so that no one will take offense, the Communists promised to select a reliable team of "bright and competent people" for the general secretary.

Zyuganov kept their names secret until it became clear that attempts to win over politicians of a higher level, such as Yavlinskiy or even Grachev, had failed. During his electoral trip to Altay in March, Gennadiy Andreyevich finally named those who might take up posts in his government: Tuleyev, Baburin, Goryacheva, Ilyukhin, and Ryzhkov. A bit later he also mentioned Starodubtsev.

But the general secretary never dared make public the whole lineup of the Communist government. In all likelihood, the Communists simply decided to classify this "Cabinet of Ministers" so as not to frighten people away. Be that as it may, talk about members of a "Government of People's Trust" [PND] has effectively ceased.

But the MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS editorial board has obtained an interesting document drawn up by analysts of the CPRF [Communist Party of the Russian

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Federation]. It turns out that all posts have long been allocated in the Zyuganov government.

The post of Chernomyrdin in the PND will be taken over by Aman Tuleyev; his deputies will be Maslyukov, chairman of the State Duma Economic Policy Committee (also to become the economy minister), and film director Govorukhin (also to become the culture minister). Defense Minister Grachev will make way for General Makashov, hero of 1993. The Security Ministry is to be headed by Ilyukhin, "a born prosecutor" known for his unscrupulousness; the Foreign Ministry, by Aleksey Podberezkin, chief of an organization that is rumored to be financed by the Russian-American University (you can imagine what our foreign policy will be). The "Red businessman" Semago will get the Foreign Economic Relations Ministry; the Ministries of Justice, Finance, Press, and Nationalities will be given to Messrs. Isakov, Pavlov, Anpilov, and Baburin respectively. The Internal Affairs Ministry and Agriculture will fall under the jurisdiction of Gurov and coup plotter Starodubtsev. The State Property Committee will be comrade Bratishchev's domain. MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS' Political Department would be sincerely glad to see most aforementioned "ministers" taken to a district PND with a different expansion [psycho-neurological clinic].

Yet, the document's tastiest "raisin" is that the Communists want to revive the Politburo — albeit under a new title: the Supreme Intellectual Council. It will be tasked with exercising supervision over the executive and legislative branches of power. You cannot but imagine a group in white tunics surrounded by muses, and a piano in the corner, right behind the library....

But don't look for the names of the country's top intellectuals on the lists of "Brain Ring" [a television game] champions, Nobel Prize winners, members of the Academy of Sciences, or other giants of Russian thought. Levy-Strauss, a French philosopher, once said: "A barbarian is one who believes in barbarity." According to this definition, the new Politburo will be composed exclusively of barbarians, those who unquestioningly believe in the flawlessness of the Communist regime and who are ready at any appropriate moment to crap in somebody else's vase of Sevres porcelain. (Theirs are buried in the courtyard until better times.)

The Supreme Intellectual Council is to be headed by Valentin Kuptsov, the Communist Party's "eminence grise." Gennadiy Andreyevich, who can open his mouth charmingly, appears to be a mere plush puppet in Kuptsov's tenacious grip. It is Valentin Aleksandrovich, not the CPRF head, who runs all the cells of the "Red network" spread over cities and villages of mother Russia. He oversees the purity of party ranks (rumor has it that he even checked the State Duma's cleaning women as to their loyalty). He recalls nostalgically the era of Brezhnev and Andropov; that is, he belongs to the most hard-line wing of the CPRF, which has not yet announced its true intentions aloud (except for a number of too-loquacious party members, such as Sokolov, chairman of the State Duma Tourism Committee — of which Kuptsov is, by the way, also a member — who has proposed that sightseeing tours of places associated with Lenin be revived, and who called oppression an element of social progress).

The other "intellectuals" — comrades Zorkaltsev, Ivanchenko, Kostin, Melnikov, let alone the poetically minded Lukyanov, who once nearly flooded the country with blood — hew to similar views. The list ends with eight even less familiar names: Peshkov, Surkov, Belov, Vidmanov, Koptyug, Ionov, Nikitin, Tsiku. (Incidentally, all the "intellectuals" are CPRF members.)

In short, the good president of the people — Zyuganov — and his ministers will be closely watched by the iron-pants party members of the old school, in whose Marxist-Leninist intentions MOSKOVSKIY KOMSOMOLETS experts have no doubts at all.

As a matter of fact, we did not find anything — try hard as we might — concerning the Supreme Intellectual Council in the Constitution. This means that the Fundamental Law will be drastically changed under a Red president. For the Communists, the law is not written...

Russia: Leaked Communist Party Document Promises Anti-Democratic Policies

LD1605124196 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1800 GMT 15 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Once when Kozyrev was addressing a very large international forum as Russian foreign minister, he made the unexpected statement that Russia was renouncing all its commitments on the international arena. Kozyrev just made this up, to everybody's astonishment. His statement was meant to show that power has changed hands in Russia. Only later did Kozyrev explain that power had not yet changed hands but that the country could return to the situation which he had depicted.

Yevgeniy Primakov, the incumbent Russian foreign minister, is unlikely to play such frightening games, however good the grounds now are for fearing this. A leak of information from the depths of Gennadiy Zyuganov's party apparatus has taken place which

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makes it possible to judge the intentions of the advocates of universal well-being. The party of communists is proposing yet another program. Sergey Pashkov reports:

[Pashkov] The leading organs of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation must take measures to set up primary party organizations at enterprises under all forms of ownership, in the law-enforcement bodies, and in the Armed Forces. Party organizations at all levels must start checking on party members' activities in the period when the antipeople's regime was carrying out repressions. In the period when extraordinary measures are being carried out, it is first and foremost the political views of candidates which should be taken into account when new appointments are made.

Does the rough language of party newspeak with its measured and strict style not sound convincing? It seems that the communists are likely to know perfectly well what will they have to face if they win the elections and they are preparing for this beforehand. Here is one more quotation from the program for extraordinary measures: Elimination of the socio-economic basis of the counter-revolution will need tough and decisive measures to nationalize and expropriate illegally appropriated property; to establish full state supervision over the financial and banking spheres, incomes, and the circulation of money and goods; to suppress by economic, administrative, and legislative methods any opposition from the profiteering bourgeoisie. The quotation ends.

I do not know how you are feeling, but the intentions of the authors of that text make my blood freeze. It is curious that the anonymous draft is, as the document says, the work of a large collective of economists and administrative specialists. I think all of us have personal experience of relations with such specialists; we acquired that experience in the recent past.

How real is the threat that these plans of Sharikov's [fictional communist zealot] will be put into practice? Let us hear what Sergey Pavlenko, head of the working center for economic reforms of the Russian Government, has to say.

[Begin Pavlenko recording] All logic indicates that an attempt will be made to implement a similar or a more expanded and deepened program. There is no alternative, unless present policies are to be continued with some purely cosmetic amendments. But in that case, it is completely incomprehensible why one Zyuganov should be substituted for Yeltsin as president. It looks like nothing similar is possible. A choice will have top be made. [end recording]

Russia: Zhirinovskiy Explains LDPR Election Platform

LD1605153696 Moscow Programma Radio Odin Network in Russian 0330 GMT 16 May 96

[Interview with Vladimir Volfovich Zhirinovskiy, chairman of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR), by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given — live or recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [passage indistinct] [Correspondent] Vladimir Volfovich, if you were to become president today, what program of priority measures would you offer Russians?

[Zhirinovskiy] I favor returning to the way of the Russian state as an empire in the good sense of the word, for a big, major state; however, it would be one in which all peoples live freely. There would be no ethnic cages — saying there is Chuvashia, there is Mordovia, there is Yakutia; Russia is a fatherland for all. There would be no nationalities issue, as in past decades when we forced people to specify their nationality, write it on forms, and then because of that allowing or denying them rights. That is the main issue and we will resolve that. We will have a big state of Russia with a highly-developed culture for everyone. That will be an important step forward.

[Correspondent] On Radio Odin's election program we have LDPR Chairman Vladimir Zhirinovskiy. What do you have to offer Russians in terms of your party's economic program?

[Zhirinovskiy] New technology. We really do have obsolete factories, and if we just give out money or — as was done under the communists — just take products into store, we will never get out of the economic crisis. We have to help these people. For example, we could set up a new factory on the basis of an old one, and if not all the workers are needed then we can help those workers who are not needed by paying them benefits so that they are not in material need and help them move into another enterprise. That is, we can create an economic boom in the country.

For example, in our fatherland we have an immense area of empty land, an immense amount of building materials, and we have lots of forests. Then there are loans. Let us give loans — not cash. Suppose I am a young family man with a wife and child. I get a loan for 50 years, let us say for 100 million rubles. I build for myself or purchase a new apartment, then I start to repay the loan from my salary, because I have a debt to the state. But my family lives in a new apartment and I am eagerly looking to work as well and to earn. I cannot go drinking, loafing about, or idling. I have to

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repay the debt and the loan is for 50 years. Perhaps I will not pay it all back — my son will have to do that — but we, our family, are already living in that apartment. And the same applies to cars and furniture. Develop the loans system further.

[Correspondent] So you have a real opportunity to fix a person in that place, to his land and to give him an interest...

[Zhirinovskiy, interrupting] Yes, yes. Give him an interest, that's right — 100 percent. If he is a farmer, give him land, give him abandoned buildings, give him cultivating equipment, give him fertilizer, give him all kinds of assistance. Let us give him roads, telephones, everything. That is, get everyone to work. Suppose I am a small farmer and you are a telephonist, a doctor, or a vet. Everyone is working, but all together, because we are getting the food we need. In every country of the world agriculture makes a loss. Why is it subsidized? So that people have jobs, otherwise they would be on the streets and they would riot. So you have an industry known to be unprofitable, but vital, because it employs a lot of people and because of the food. It could also be better in the towns if we were to preserve only what is economically advantageous to us all.

Then there is culture, of course. Here we should not leave things to later. Culture has to move forward in parallel with or even ahead of us. I assure you, a hungry person will come to the theater for a good show. If there are no theatres, no newspapers, no radio, no television, no schools, no cultured people, even the most materially satisfied people resort to violence. They are fed and clothed, but have no culture. Like it or not, this is some kind of fight, it is restrictive and demeaning.

Take the Army: the barracks contain 18-year old youths; they have food, they have accommodation, they have someone in charge of them, but they have no culture. They have been pushed and shoved under one roof and the bullying starts. What should happen here is that the Army should not be calling up these, but older, more educated youths, so that we have more male lecturers in higher education educating officers in the barracks and we eliminate the bullying problem. That is, material conditions and culture, the way we think and are brought up, should develop in parallel and then we will have a normal state, a normal economy, and a normal way of thinking.

[Correspondent] Vladimir Volfovich, something that worries many of our listeners is the situation in Chechnya. What would you do to stop the war in Chechnya if you became president?

[Zhirinovskiy] First of all, it is vital that we should have a new team. I met with Dudayev. He said it is no good sending people like Starovoytova or Shakhray; you need people who understand Muslims, the Caucasus, single-issue specialists. But, in principle, I believe that there is a set of circumstances here in which only force will do — they must be made to surrender their weapons — but in other cases we need to resolve some of their social problems. There are ways of doing this, but 33,000 rebels have to lay down arms and be reconciled, then peace will definitely come to the Caucasus. And this can be achieved by a new team, a new team.

Today, when Chernomyrdin acts on his own and Yeltsin acts on his own, the war is not dying away. But if on 17 June a new political team appears, I can assure you that the war can be ended quickly. We will end it.

[Correspondent] And will you not be wary of the sorry experience of the Caucasus war of the last century?

[Zhirinovskiy] Yes, you have to learn from that and that is why we have to take a range of measures to stop it going on for decades, like in Ireland. Take Europe, not the Caucasus. Belfast in Northern Ireland has been burning for 26 years. We do not need that, nor do the Chechens. Similarly, the [word indistinct] Irish catholics and the British protestants had no need of 20 years of war. So we have to and need to resolve this, because we do not want our boys to die there and our parents to lose their sons. The same goes, I am sure, for the Chechens. It is group of frenzied rebels who have no need of anything, only the trigger and blood. They cannot manage without these things. They, they belong to a particular category of people, like those who smash up cars or inject drugs. This problem can be resolved, but obviously only after the elections.

[Correspondent] That was an election address on Radio-1 by LDPR Chairman Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, candidate for president of the Russian Federation.

Russia: Lebed Intends To Make No Promises to Voters

LD1605225196 St. Petersburg Fifth Channel Television Network in Russian 1705 GMT 15 May 96

[Election broadcast by presidential candidate Aleksandr Lebed; place not given — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] Hello, esteemed electors! The spring presidential race is on and they are chasing after you. The presidential candidates are crisscrossing the country and handing out promises left, right, and center. The promises do not quite coincide and contradict each other. It is hard being a candidate. You have to make your pitch to as many and different people as possible,

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you have to explain to everyone that they need only drop their voting slip in the box and after that everything will be okay.

Let me say straight away that I will disappoint those who expect to hear another round of promises. I do not intend to promise anything to anyone. I do not play that game. The only place you will find something for free is in a mousetrap. I have never put my hand in one of them, and I advise you not to. The things that are free are not worth anything.

I, Aleksandr Lebed, belong to no party. It is my deliberate choice. Do you know why?

The recent Duma elections showed that there is an electorate, a pre-packaged electorate, that is divided into the Zyuganate and Yeltsinate. In the middle are 60 to 62 percent of the voters, who are simply people. Normal people, citizens in their land, wishing to be masters of their land and to live on it using their minds and by their own laws. I stand for them, for these voters, for the people.

A party always assumes there is an opponent, against a bloc there always stands another bloc. I depend only on you. Only on you.

So I entered politics. I will explain why, using an example. At the beginning of summer 1991, a high-ranking visitor came to the Soviet Union: Four-star General Colin Powell, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the United States. I was then the deputy commander of the airborne troops and I was asked to show off the power and strength of the airborne forces. There was a high wind on the day of the show. I reported to Gen. Grachev, the commander of the airborne forces, that it would not be possible to do an air drop. He thought about it for a long time, and then unexpectedly decided to go ahead with it: Let Gen. Powell see what Russian paratroopers can do. Do it.

So we jumped. People were hitting the ground at enormous speed. One man died, several dozen others broke their arms and legs. The American general stood in the viewing area and kept asking: What are you doing? What are you doing? Did he feel sorry for us? No way. He is just an ordinary man, a general who understands the value of life and blood. He simply was not used to seeing people treated like that.

So I ask: What are we doing? Why, six years ago, did we make dozens of men jump for the amusement of a foreign general? Now we send tens of thousands to Chechnya. What has changed? We were like cattle. We were just small cogs in the state machine, and that is how we remain. We are nobody. Nameless. The state is beyond our reach. It is beyond us. It can do with us what it wants. We are paralyzed by social dumbness and cannot get away from that. That is what they tell us: There is nothing you can do about it.

I say that there is. I have had enough of it. Of no rights. I have had enough of the helplessness. I have had enough of social dumbness, and I have had enough of lying in the mud. We are people, in our own land. We are the masters here. We are going to live here, using our minds and applying our laws. We are going to make laws that are relevant, so it is worthwhile observing them. We will protect our freedom with sensible laws. I have had enough.

I intend to breach the wall of social dumbness. I intend to break down the wall of powerlessness and malice. [screen caption: "That is why I want to be president..."]

We are told: Make your choice. There is a wide choice: communists, democrats. So, make your choice. But I say it is all the same, these are just two halves of the same nomenklatura. There is nothing to choose between them. There is no choice. Under the communists, there were lines to party committees and lies. Under the democrats, there are prices exceeding all bounds, the rule of the criminal world, and open cynical lies. Lies again. They wanted to do better for the people and ended up, as always, by doing better for the administrative elite.

Neither of the two could ensure one thing, the main one — an honest, satisfied, and decent life when one can work and earn a good living, when one can pay taxes, provide for one's family and not be afraid of anything — they failed to provide that and there is no hope they will. The power has remained alien and predatory, it is the power of the administrative elite. It repeatedly demonstrated both in 1991 and 1993 that the two halves of the administrative elite had forgiven each other. You remember that.

I have repeatedly tried to change something from the bottom. Then it dawned upon me and I realized that it was impossible to change anything in this system from the bottom. Things can and must be changed only from the top. Things can and must be changed only in favor of the majority of people. Things must be changed for the masters of their land. That is why I want to be president. [screen caption: "All of us know the answer..."]

Why are we living like this? Why is it that in the world's richest country, in which free breakfast can and should be provided for everyone, people are not living but just surviving? Why is it that year after year, decade after decade we have been dragging out a miserable and shameful existence? Why? In the past the Nazi called us "Untermensch": "unter" means "junior" and "mensch" means "man" — "junior people" or "subhuman." We

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did not argue with them. We just broke their necks and threw all their banners, crosses, and swastika on the cobblestones of Red Square. What price we paid for that is a different matter. But we won because we are not Untermensch. Because we are a great people, one of the greatest peoples in the world. The people who twice throughout history smashed two of the world's most powerful armies and empires. A great but perhaps the unhappiest people. So why are we living like this? I will give your the answer. There is no secret here. All of us know the answer. [screen caption: "This is no way to live..."]

By several of its measures, the state has done all it can to put the citizens off normal and honest work. Nobody obeys the law and nobody fears the law. Nobody is afraid of not paying their debts, of not paying wages for months on end. They thieve not only on the goods in the factories but also the factories as well. Why? I think it is because there is simply no law. Instead of law we have thieves in law. Not in the traditional garb but official: I mean the bureaucrats. To put it politely, this is called nomenklatura capitalism. To put it bluntly, it is a complete mess. Everyone describes it as a complete mess.

But anyone who thinks this is total disorder is badly deluded. This particular complete mess has its own special and tightly-regulated order. Those at the top are the ones who profit. They can share out the bublik [bread roll like a bagel] among the gentlemen bureaucrats and give the hole to the people. This is why the state lives for itself away from the people and the people live away from the state, and away from the property. This is the way we were brought up: Keep your head down below the pain threshold and somehow scrape by.

Everything in the state just exists by itself. This is no way to live. [screen caption: "What is the way out?..."]

What is the way out and what will we do, you may ask me. The answer lies on the surface. Order and market are the supreme rule — throughout its history the thinking mankind has not invented anything better. There is the state — a rigid administrative-command system under which civil servants serve, carry out orders, implement the law, and ensure that the law is adhered to by industrialists, entrepreneurs, salesmen, engineers, students, soldiers, and all the other categories of citizens. They manage from there but they do not interfere in the affairs of the market. There is the market — it is ruled by the supply and demand, people trade there, take risks, and make market research. At the same time they do not interfere in the administration of the state. This simple division eliminates the monster called capitalism of the administrative elite, puts everything in its place so that civil servants serve, they are employed by the state service, they have to prove their competence. A market for bribes disappears. People begin to live. [screen caption: "I have the will to make the first step..."]

I am not an economist. I do not think that the president's main task is to make economy work — economy is just a means, a means to make the Russian person rise from his knees.

There is no empire now. The empire collapsed. We may have regrets, and recall what a great and proud empire it was, but it is gone. Russia is left. A young Russia standing at the crossroads. The road we take today will dictate the road that our children and our Russia take tomorrow. Collectively, we are all parents.

Our children have already picked up their first words: Reket [racket, as in racketeering], krysha [cover, as in criminal], babki [slang for cash], baksy [bucks, greenbacks], konsensus, nayezd [slang meaning: to go for someone, to attack someone]

We should pass on to them a clean heritage.

All the filth and lies, skepticism and cowardice we must overcome today and here. We must hand on to them clear, clean, simple and honest laws, simple and clear rules for living. Then we will have our Russia.

For five years we have been marking time. There comes the time when we must take our first honest and major step. The will is there to take this step. Give me the strength, the strength of your support.

Russia: Election Campaign Slot by Svyatoslav Fedorov

LD1605203196 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1635 GMT 16 May 96

[Interview with Russian Presidential candidate Svyatoslav Fedorov by correspondent Kipras Mazheyka; place and date not given; from the "Elections '96" program — live or recorded]

[FBIS Summary] At the beginning of this 10-minute program Mazheyka introduces Svyatoslav Fedorov as "one of the main and realistic presidential candidates," and first asks him about the success of his eye clinics abroad before asking directly what he could do for the electorate in certain areas of policy, mostly economic. Fedorov's vision is of an enterprise culture run by a motivated work force, whose higher earnings will fuel a simplified tax system weighted toward indirect taxation and able to finance subsidies for agriculture and higher welfare spending. He thinks a deal could be done with the Chechens, but if not, then let them try to go it alone.

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The interview is interspersed with stills of Fedorov pointing to the distance against a backdrop of the Kremlin's Spasskaya Tower and in other presidential poses.

On ownership and remuneration, Fedorov notes that very few businesses in Russia are owned by the people who work at them. "So most people in this country are hired hands. They sometimes do not get paid for three months, and when they do get paid it is usually not much. So they are being used to earn money. Therefore, the main idea is that those who do the work should be the proprietors, so that they get their share and their due from their work," Fedorov says. This is the system in place at Fedorov's own businesses, where people work hard and are well-rewarded. Fedorov continues: "In the course of this work, a new morality arises: If you do not support your colleague and partner, then your earnings will suffer too. I think that this creates an entirely new working relationship, based on friendship and mutual assistance. It creates entirely different people, and this is the most important thing: We are raising new people with a new morality of work."

Russia's present tax system is too complex, Fedorov says, and should be pared down. "We think, and I think, that sensible taxes should be paid on land, on incomes — and not necessary progressive, a flat rate of 15-20 percent might be enough — and, most importantly, we think, when you sell something and someone pays you money you should give about 20 percent of that money for culture, that is, as tax, for the state." This will give the state enough for upkeep of the military, medicine, education, and the other essentials.

Fedorov wants more state control of the country's natural resources. "I think that these resources belong to the people. So the idea is that we should all have a share of these resources, be it in the form of money or something else. But it would be best for these resources to supply the budget. Taxes could then be reduced and our national resource base — gas, oil, metals — will help replenish our budget and allow us to live for a while without these heavy taxes, as I have said before, without the burden. So that Russians are liberated from that burden, so that they can get off their knees, stand tall, buy equipment, start earning, start their own businesses, collective or private, it does not matter. I think that all forms of ownership should exist and compete against each other," Fedorov says.

Fedorov calls for more state support for the farmers, particularly in the form of subsidies for machinery. The cost of doing this will be met from tax revenues, which will be greater because motivated workers are more productive, earn higher incomes, and therefore pay more tax. Higher welfare expenditure will be financed in the same way. "When people own the results of their labor, when they set up private or collective businesses or some kind of cooperative, their productivity increases by an average of 50 percent; sometimes by 100 percent. Even if we assume 50 percent, then in literally two or three years the state budget will not be $38 or $40 billion, about 180 trillion rubles, it will be 2 or 2.5 times that, or more. That will make it possible to pay proper pensions of about 1 million [sentence as heard]. That will make it possible for us to feed our officers and soldiers, who cannot even eat properly today. That will allow us to solve our disabled people's problems. That is, production should feed us all. People should produce goods of high quality, sell them, and feed their state and themselves."

Asked about Chechnya, Fedorov says he thinks a deal could be done on power-sharing with the Chechens, but if not, then they could go it alone. "I think we could quite calmly resolve the issue with the Chechen rebel leaders, and agree on how to share the wealth in Chechnya, how much they should leave for the central government and how much not. If they will not agree, and if they really want some kind of incomprehensible freedom, then we should draw a clearly-defined border, without the lands that Khrushchev handed over, where the Terek Cossacks lived, and let them try to live by themselves. I think they will find it very difficult today without science, without highly-educated people, living as a small nation. In an extreme case, we can go for that, because what is going on now is simply immoral. It is simply criminal, I believe."

The program ends with a series of vox pops, in which ordinary people voice their approval of Svyatoslav Fedorov for president.

Russia: Contenders' First TV Promotional Slots Assessed

MM1705110796 Moscow TRUD-7 in Russian 17-23 May 96 p 2

[Article by Olga Solomonova: "Contenders' Speeches. Elections: A Free Movie Show"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The presidential election is a month off, it is now time for vigorous campaigning. On television the movie show involving the contenders for the country's top post began 14 May. And now we can watch the political serial every morning and evening, weekends aside.

Let me recall that each of the 11 presidential contenders is entitled to half an hour of free political advertising on three television channels — ORT [Russian Public

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Television], Russian Television, and St. Petersburg Television — that is, state television. The order in which they appear is determined by drawing lots.

In the first three days the voters have been offered a choice of four presidential contenders. You can already see from these videos how expertly their election headquarters are operating, and whether they have been able to recruit top-notch specialists to conduct their campaign.

Martin Shakkum opened the campaign saga. How did he do? The candidate's traditional studio speech about Russia's problems and calamities, emphasizing his knowledge of a way out of the deadlock, alternated with an offscreen narrated text. Moreover, the frankly enthusiastic descriptions of the candidate, uttered in well-measured tones, moved me almost to tears. The voice off screen solemnly listed them, saying that he is good, honest, fair...and "devilishly smart." But it is a simple matter, like a school literature project, to describe the main features of the character of the positive hero of the novel "On the Presidential Election." Shakkum's television video can be said to have been produced as a piece of political advertising, to be taken literally, without fanfare.

The encounter with CPRF [Communist Party of the Russian Federation] leader Gennadiy Zyuganov was also presented without any particular originality or ingenuity, but at least television's potential was exploited to some extent. There were newsreel shots with, needless to say, a plethora of red banners and singing, and the presidential contender spoke to the journalist in a supposedly informal atmosphere. "Supposedly" — because he was attired quite officially and, at some points, even solemnly. As though Gennadiy Andreyevich had been getting ready for a reception when, suddenly, the television cameras arrived. The candidate was smiling and softly spoken, but this was hard to believe: We have already heard that he equates the Communists' hypothetical presidential election victory with the Soviet people's victory in the Great Patriotic War. Clearly the Communists are preparing for a fierce political fight, to the last — the iron fist in the velvet glove....

The Svyatoslav Fedorov video was also shot in a natural environment, at his dacha. Admittedly, it was shot at a desk with the candidate, moderator Kipras Mazheyka, and four other well-known people — A. Porokhovshchikov, K. Vanshenkin, A. Leonov, and M. Chartayev. They said what a remarkable politician Fedorov is and urged people to vote for him. As we know, the candidate upholds the so-called "third way" for Russia, whose trail has been blazed by the "Mikrokhirurgiya glaza" ["Eye Microsurgery"] scientific technical complex.

The item featuring Grigoriy Yavlinskiy was perhaps the most interesting. Needless to say, this candidate's text held nothing new or interesting for educated people with an interest in politics — it was just a piece of pure enlightenment and education for the voters. But, first, this kind of education does seem necessary — this was demonstrated by people on the film who are unaware of their electoral rights or the election procedure. Second, a candidate who, you would have thought, should be campaigning for himself spent his airtime, unlike his rivals, explaining voters' rights. Does that seem noble? Of course. Third, he did not say a word about himself at all. The pronoun "I" was only heard once. We, us — he is with us, the voters. Effective? Maybe. But people filmed in various cities, in the countryside — real living people, far-removed from politics — are sincere, sympathetic, and sometimes even absurd. Even the Moscow hobo saying that what is necessary is not just a second but a third round of elections....

"Hard-hitting" advertising will scarcely have an effect on those who have not yet made up their minds for whom to vote. Those who produce the advertisements are perfectly well aware of that. But skilled, political promotional clips and videos are not a frequent phenomena. This is a fairly new business in our country, and we do not have that many top-notch specialists. The election campaign on television has only just begun, and we have only seen examples of the first, free, advertisements. There will also be paid ads. The candidates are probably saving their most interesting campaigning for nearer 16 June. It is after all like the theater, where it is the last lines that stick in the memory.

Russia: Electoral Commission Issues Warnings for Violations

LD1605202996 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2011 GMT 16 May 96

[By Igor Belskiy]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 16 (Itar-Tass) — The Russian Central Election Commission (CEC) today issued its first warnings about violation of rules for pre-election propaganda.

Raif Biktagirov, a CEC member, told reporters today that signs of irregularities were fairly numerous.

Pro-communist newspapers Pravda, Sovetskaya Rossiya, Pravda Rossii and Russkiye Vedomosti have started political advertisement in favour of Gennadiy Zyuganov before the election law-set time.

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The newspaper Stavrpolskaya Pravda was propagating President Boris Yeltsin as a candidate for another term of presidency.

Biktagirov said protests had been coming from different regions of Russia about messages of a free supplement to the newspaper Ne Dai Bog, whose editor is Lev Shemayev. Initial issues of the newspaper carried no information about publishers. A total of ten million copies have been put into circulation.

In addition, communist leader Gennadiy Zyuganov and ultra-nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy exploited their status of parliament members to electioneer on television when they were on their election trips in the Voronezh and Altay regions.

Ex-president Mikhail Gorbachev, a presidential aspirant now, has addressed electorates in an appearance on Buryat television.

The election commission cited mayors of Moscow and St. Petersburg in relation to faults in their mayoral campaigns.

Only one official, Maritime territorial governor Yevgeniy Nazadratenko, can embark on his campaign as he is on leave.

The CEC's statement says some televsion and radio companies ignored the principle of equality of candidates.

Biktagirov said the CEC today gave a go-ahead to television debates of Vladimir Bryntsalov, one of the 11 presidential candidates.

Meanwhile, the chairman of the presidential media arbitration chamber, Anatoliy Vengerov, said in a statement that the chamber had not found violations of the election law by Boris Yeltsin.

Russia: Second Round of Presidential Elections Likely 7 or 14 July

LD1705104796 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1030 GMT 17 May 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Igor Beiskiy]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 17 May (Itar-Tass) — The most likely dates for holding a second round of the presidential elections, if a candidate is not determined in the first round, are 7 July or 14 July. Aleksandr Veshnyakov, secretary of the Central Electoral Commission, reported this today.

Russia: Stavropol Poll Shows 31 Percent To Vote for Zyuganov

LD1605124696 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1110 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] STAVROPOL, May 16 (Interfax) — A total of 31 percent of residents in the Stavropol territory plan to vote for leader of the Communist Party of Russia Gennadiy Zyuganov in the presidential elections slated for June 16, while 17 percent of respondents intend to give their votes to current head of state Boris Yeltsin, according to an opinion poll conducted by the Stavropol Center of Humanitarian Studies in the territory's cities and districts on May 12-15.

About 12 percent of respondents intend to vote for Liberal Democratic Party leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy and retired General and Duma deputy Aleksandr Lebed, 10 percent for Yabloko party leader Grigoriy Yavlinksiy, 8 percent for eye-surgeon Svyatoslav Fedorov and 2 percent for ex-President of the USSR Mikhail Gorbachev, director of the center Oleg Naumov told Interfax.

Eight percent of the respondents found it difficult to answer.

A total of 30 percent of respondents definitely intend to take part in the elections in accordance with results of the opinion poll. Another 47 percent of respondents said that they are likely to go to the polling stations.

A total of 1,100 people participated in the survey.

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CIS: UN's Butrus-Ghali Addresses CIS Summit in Moscow

LD1705093796 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0919 GMT 17 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 17 (Interfax) — U.N. General Secretary Butrus Butrus-Ghali addressed the summit of CIS leaders on Friday after the conclusion of the plenary session.

Before ceding the microphone to Butrus-Ghali, Russian President Boris Yeltsin said, "with this meeting, we see a new affirmation of the mutual interest of the CIS and United Nations in furthering their relations in the name of mankind's future."

Butrus-Ghali confirmed his organization's wishes for cooperation in all spheres with the CIS.

His speech focused on furthering ties between regional organizations and the United Nations. He called this process "peaceful cooperation."

Butrus-Ghali said the main principle of cooperation between the CIS and U.N. was a joint effort to create an international system of stability, peace, and progress.

He stressed the positive role of the U.N.'s cooperation with the CIS in settling down "hot spots" of regional as well as international conflicts. He said Abkhazia, Tajikistan and "conflict territories in other parts of the world" were positive examples of this.

He expressed special gratitude to Russia for the "material and diplomatic support it has given peace efforts."

CIS: Yeltsin Addresses CIS Leaders on Integration

LD1705125796 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1205 GMT 17 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The main event of the day was the meeting of CIS leaders in the Kremlin. Opening the plenary session in the Yekatereninskiy Hall, Russian President Boris Yeltsin said, in particular:

[Begin Yeltsin recording] I look into the future with optimism and I am convinced that the people of Russia will make the right choice. During the election campaign, the idea of integration within the CIS framework was adopted by all the movements and presidential candidates. No one disputes this idea. It proves, on the one hand, that integration is based on an objective foundation and, on the other hand, that, being responsible politicians, we must clearly distinguish peoples' striving for unity from demagogic statements which can only harm the process of integration. I consider attempts at restoration of the old system by force as well as the isolation which would destroy the great Eurasian unity of the CIS equally inadmissible.

For almost five years we have been persistently searching for new and effective forms of equal cooperation between our states. The recent period was marked by major steps in the development of integration processes. Thus, the customs union between Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and the Russian Federation was formed. At the end of March [this year], our states also succeeded in signing a large-scale treaty on deepening integration in the economic and social spheres. Russia and Belarus moved even further on the path of integration by concluding a treaty on forming a community of two states. I view these treaties as a breakthrough into the future. Sovereignty continues to mean sovereignty, but it must not become a barrier to human and economic interaction. [end recording]

CIS: Yeltsin Says CIS Integration Does Not Infringe on Sovereignty

LD1705102396 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0947 GMT 17 May 96

[By Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW May 17 (Itar-Tass) — The integration of former Soviet republics, now united in the Commonwealth of Independent States, does not infringe on their sovereignty, but promotes human contacts and is the only issue on which both Russian democrats and communists are united, according to President Boris Yeltsin.

"Sovereignty remains sovereignty, but it should not be a barrier for human contacts", he said addressing CIS leaders on Friday.

"In the course of the election campaign (in Russia) the idea of a deeper integration in the CIS framework was supported by all public movements and presidential candidates and nobody doubts it", Yeltsin said, but stressed that the reformists were truly working for the integration, while the communists were only speaking about it.

"As responsible politicians, we should clearly distinguish between the will of the peoples to unite and the demagogy which is capable to impede the integration process", Yeltsin said clearly referring to the communist-dominated State Duma resolution which annulled the collapse of the Soviet Union and caused negative reaction from CIS leaders.

"Unacceptable are both the attempts to restore the old system by force, as well as the isolationism which ruins the great Euro-Asian space of the CIS", Yeltsin said.

He stressed that a more advanced integration of some CIS member-countries was not aimed against the Commonwealth.

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"The creation of a nucleus within the Commonwealth is aimed not at weakening the CIS, but at giving it a new impetus for development", the Russian leader said.

He was referring to the customs union and advanced integration plans agreed upon by Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, as well as to the Russian-Belarusian agreement on creating a community of the two Slav countries which Yeltsin qualified as "a breakthrough into the future".

"Integration becomes multi-faceted and goes at various speeds", Yeltsin said adding that some CIS states were ready to create "joint managing mechanisms".

The integration process in the CIS resembled a multi-storeyed building in which there is "an organisational structure on each floor", according to the president.

The "deep integration" in the CIS is based on three basic principles — the preservation of sovereignty, the openness of the integration nucleus to other countries, and flexibility in forming joint managing bodies, according to Yeltsin.

One of the items on the agenda of the summit was a new integration plan for 1996-1997 which Yeltsin said was aimed at the creation of an economic CIS union.

"It is for the first time that the task of creating a unified scientific and technological information space is set. Of special importance are the envisaged measures to expand the customs union, create the settlement and currency unions. These measures will promote a homogenous economic environment on the whole CIS space", Yeltsin said.

The president said other issues on the agenda included joint fight against organised crime, as well as the issue of restoring the rights of deported peoples and an agreement on cooperation of frontier troops.

CIS: Yeltsin, Not CPRF, Retains CIS 'Integration Initiative'

MM1705115396 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 17-24 May 96 p 2

[Report by Dmitriy Babich under the "Summit" rubric: "The President Will Not Offend the President"]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Yeltsin seems to be continuing to seize the initiative from the Communists in the sphere of the integration of the countries of the former USSR, acting in the role of a new "unifier." It is planned to discuss and approve the long-term plan of CIS integration development in 1996-1997 during today's meeting of the Commonwealth heads of state in Moscow.

This document consists of six sections embracing the spheres of the economy and social policy, military building and peacemaking activity, the fight against crime, the guarding of borders, and foreign policy activity. An interstate program of joint measures to fight organized crime is also expected to be submitted to the presidents for a verdict.

As can be seen, however, Russia's neighbors in the former USSR are still concerned for their independence. There is reason to be concerned: Take, for example, the Duma's denunciation of the Belovezhskaya accords. Therefore it is proposed, on the initiative of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan, to submit for the council's consideration a draft statement by the CIS heads of state supporting the democratic processes in Russia. It notes, in particular, the Russian Federation's special role in the integrational rapprochement of the Commonwealth countries and drops other curtsies to the current president.

CIS: CIS Leaders Voice Support for Yeltsin, Democratic Russia

LD1705104096 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0949 GMT 17 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 17 (Interfax) — CIS leaders lined up and voiced their support for Russian democracy and Boris Yeltsin at the CIS summit, unanimously adopting a resolution supporting Russia's democratic reforms.

"The countries of the CIS have joined together around a democratic Russia, but they will never join together around a Communist Russia," Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan said.

"A Communist victory in Russia would lead to the immediate break-up of the CIS," he said. "We aren't going anywhere with a Communist Russia."

Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev expressed his concern about the threat to political stability. "Russia's and the CIS's real interests lie in the continuation of reforms," he said.

"The stability of the entire post-Soviet space depends on Russia," Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma said in his turn, adding that he hopes "that the reforms begun by Russia will be continued by their initiator — President Boris Yeltsin."

Moldovan President Mircea Snegur expressed the hope that CIS leaders may help Russian citizens living in their countries "voice their opinions at the upcoming elections."

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"We want the continuation of both political and economic reforms in Russia," Uzbek President Islam Karimov said. "It is due to the wise policies of the present Russian leadership that friendly relations reign all over the CIS, and the people of the CIS are quite interested in Russia's choice in June," he said, adding that he hopes "Russians show wisdom" in June.

"Personally," he said, "I support the course Russia has taken under Boris Yeltsin."

Yeltsin, for his part, thanked the CIS leaders for approving this "political document, important for Russia and for me, as a presidential candidate," he said.

All the CIS leaders noted, however, that they would respect whatever choice Russians make in June.

Still they noted in support of their joint statement, initiated by Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan, that they fully support the path Russia has taken under its present leadership. Russia, they said, was the engine powering the CIS's democratic and economic reforms.

CIS: Nazarbayev Says CIS Summit Seeks To Promote Integration

LD1605180396 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1631 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 16 (Interfax) — The summit meeting of Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan in Moscow Thursday discussed organizational matters and pressing steps to promote integration, Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev told a news conference at the Interfax main office.

He said the meeting of countries that signed the treaty on deepening integration in economic and humanitarian spheres last March formed the Integration Committee with Kazakh Deputy Prime Minister Nyghmetzhan Yesengharin as its chairman. The committee has a staff of 60, i.e. 15 representatives from each country.

Nazarbayev said the presidents agreed on a plan of joint actions in the economic and humanitarian spheres to carry out by the end of September. "The standard of integration of Kazakhstan, Russia, Belarus and Kyrgyzstan is greater than of the CIS as a whole and we must prove our words by deeds," the president said.

He said he had a one-on-one meeting with President Yeltsin which focused on Russian domestic matters as well as Caspian Sea problems.

Also on Thursday Nazarbayev met 13 leaders of Russian financial and industrial groups at their request.

CIS: Results of CIS Summit in Moscow Reported

WS1705131996 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 1200 GMT 17 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Our correspondent Svyatlana Ilyushenka sends us her report from Moscow.

The CIS summit in the Great Kremlin Palace is over. The most important result of the Moscow summit was the adoption of a statement in support of democratic processes in Russia. Heads of CIS member-states are supporting democratic changes in the Russian Federation and are expressing their deep respect toward the Russian people who are steadily implementing economic and political reforms. According to the statement of heads of the CIS member-states, the peoples of the CIS states sincerely wish the Russian people peace, welfare, and the building of a democratic society.

Today UN General Secretary Butrus Butrus-Ghali made a speech before the participants in the Moscow summit. In his opinion, the CIS will become an associate member of the United Nations [as heard], an influential international organization.

A 1996-97 plan for CIS development — through integration — was also among the most important issues discussed at the CIS summit. This document addresses specific projects concerning various aspects of life of the CIS member-states. Five substantial sections of this document address in detail prospects for mutually beneficial cooperation between the CIS countries in the economy, social policy, military construction, protection of state borders, foreign policy, and peacekeeping operations.

Heads of the CIS member-states also approved an interstate program for a joint fight against organized crime on the territory of the CIS member-states until the year 2000. A decision also was adopted to prepare and carry out festivities to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Marshal of the Soviet Union Grigoriy Konstantinovich Zhukov.

After the CIS Executive Council completed its work, heads of the CIS states held a news conference for accredited journalists.

CIS: CIS Summit Ends; Decisions Made on All Agenda Issues

LD1705090496 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0835 GMT 17 May 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Moscow, 17 May (Itar-Tass) — The plenary meeting of the Council of heads of state has ended in the Kremlin. The participants in the summit

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meeting discussed and adopted decisions on all nine items on the agenda.

ITAR-TASS has learned that an additional item was included — the question of adopting a joint statement on Nagorno-Karabakh. A decision to include this point was adopted at the closed meeting of the Council of heads of states of the CIS which preceded the plenary meeting. [passage omitted]

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Russia: Call For New European 'Security Architecture' Hailed

MM1705093696 Moscow TRUD-7 in Russian 17-23 May 96 p 2

[Article by Erik Alekseyev: "NATO's Nuclear Plans. Is the Obvious Likely?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In connection with the decision on NATO's eastward expansion the likelihood of this bloc's nuclear potential advancing toward Russia's borders is being viewed naturally, as it were. But has this probability become obvious?

Reports have appeared in the mass media that during his recent official visit to Norway NATO Secretary General Javier Solana let it be known quite clearly that nuclear weapons will be sited on the territory of East European countries when these countries become full-fledged members of the bloc. But then last Monday Solana suddenly flatly denied reports that he had spoken in Norway of the possibility of siting nuclear weapons on the territory of future NATO members. Citing a "Study" published last September, he said that with regard to NATO's expansion "the content of Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, **including its nuclear component,** will also apply to new members." Whereupon he added: "But there is no question of siting nuclear weapons on their territory. In other words, new NATO members will have to meet all the commitments incumbent on alliance members, including the "nuclear component," but "there is no question" (as yet?) of moving NATO's nuclear weapons onto their territory. This does not seem very convincing at all.

Then the very next day Warsaw's KURIER POLSKI, citing "high-ranking officials" in the Polish General Staff, announced that **after Poland joins NATO the alliance command will site nuclear weapons and their delivery vehicles on its territory.**

In the above-cited rebuttal Javier Solana also specially stressed that altogether NATO's nuclear forces in Europe have been cut by 80 percent. Only it is not very clear how the countries left outside NATO, including Russia — which recently readily "relieved" itself of sophisticated intermediate-range missiles — should regard that remaining 20 percent. While such an authoritative person in his field as NATO Nuclear Planning Group spokesman Greg Shalt [name as transliterated] reaffirmed a few days ago that **nuclear weapons remain at the center of NATO strategy.**

On the whole, though, leaving aside all manner of reservations, a general picture does emerge clearly enough. At all levels it is stated and constantly reaffirmed that NATO will advance eastward, toward Russia's borders with all its military-political potential. No "right of veto" is admissible for Russia and it has no other option than to come to terms with this in — it is claimed — its own interests. If it takes up such a "realistic" position it may be offered all manner of assurances just to keep it outside NATO, which is effectively to remain the only guarantor of the security system established by the United States for Europe.

But is Russia alone in taking a mistrustful or simply negative view of NATO's plan for eastward expansion? For some reason opinions containing an extremely critical assessment of the aims and methods of NATO's true leaders have not been widely covered in the mass media. Let us cite just some of the things that have been said by quite authoritative individuals.

Here is the opinion of someone with "inside" knowledge of the problem, so to speak — Stansfield Turner, former CIA director in the Carter administration and former commander of NATO forces, Southern Europe: "The NATO bloc was set up during the Cold War with completely clear aims. These aims have now been achieved. The situation has changed, and NATO now finds itself engaged in a quest for its new political goals. So **why not disband NATO altogether?**"

Our relations with neighboring Finland have known good times and bad times, there is plenty of experience of both. Just a few days ago Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari said that **a system of collective security in Europe can only be created with Russia's participation.** "Isolating Russia from the rest of the continent," he stressed, "would be a catastrophic mistake."

A few days ago French President Jacques Chirac published an article in LE MONDE. Two main ideas should be singled out, which Chirac has, moreover, voiced on several previous occasions. First, he is convinced that the international tasks facing France and the European Union include the **revamping of NATO.** Second, **it is necessary to create a "new architecture" for European security with Russia's participation.**

If you so desire you can see that many people worldwide, and primarily in Europe, are coming to the conviction — albeit not as yet very loudly — that **the bloc system has outlived itself,** even if it is called a security system, in circumstances whereby some are included in it, some are kept on the sidelines, and some are left in the position of pariahs.

The concept of a "new architecture" of European security — real collective security without any discrimination — is blazing a trail for itself, albeit not very boldy as yet. I just hope it has sufficient stalwart supporters prepared to actively promote such constructive ideas.

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Russia: Practicalities Examined of Getting START II Amended

MM1705093996 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 17 May 96 p 3

["Expert Opinion" by Gennadiy Obolenskiy: "Can START II Be 'Rectified'?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Passions in the Russian Federation State Duma have currently become inflamed over the Russian-U.S. START II treaty, which the Russian Federation president submitted for ratification in the middle of last year.

Moving away from the actual arguments (KRASNAYA ZVEZDA has already written a great deal about this), I would suggest giving thought to how this question can be resolved in practice.

The Russian Federation president submitted to the Russian Federation State Duma the actual 10-page text of the treaty which he and U.S. President G. Bush signed back in 1993, plus three appendixes. The legislative body cannot make any changes to the text of the documents presented to it. It has only two options: To accept this document — that is, to ratify it, accompanying ratification, if necessary, with additional provisos and conditions — or not to accept this treaty, returning it to the executive authorities should the State Duma decide that the treaty needs additional work. Here it makes no fundamental difference whether the text of the treaty requires a negligible amendment or a complete reworking (in the event of complete rejection of the treaty).

Even supporters of ratification of the START II treaty in the State Duma, the Russian Federation Government, and presidential structures (judging by reports in the mass media) are proposing that the START II treaty be ratified only with certain provisos and conditions.

The following figure first and foremost among these provisos and conditions:

First, there is the problem of preserving the 1972 ABM Treaty as the fundamental basis ensuring the implementation of treaties on the reduction and limitation of strategic offensive arms. As a result of the intention of the U.S. Congress and, to a certain extent, the administration itself to withdraw from the ABM treaty (it is of no practical significance now or after the implementation of the START II reductions) there is a need to raise in tough terms the question of the immutability of the ABM Treaty.

Another problem very closely associated with the question of the fate of the 1972 ABM treaty is that of delimiting tactical and strategic ABM systems, a problem on which the sides might be able to agree "without demolishing" the ABM treaty as a whole. Many people believe that agreement to this effect must be reached before the START II treaty is ratified.

Second, there is the need to reach agreement with the United States on altering the deadlines for implementing the treaty with a view to completing the fulfillment of all the treaty provisions not by 1 January 2003 but later (the current proposals envisage extending this deadline by a period of between three and six years). This contention is sound both legally and economically. The point is that more than three years of implementing measures to fulfill the treaty have been lost because nothing has been done since it was signed (and was not due to be done before it was ratified). A de facto reduction in the time for carrying out the enormous volume of work to be done under the treaty (if is ratified now) would cause such a strain on the country's economy that it would not be able to bear it.

Third, the problem of NATO's advance eastward, although to a considerable extent political, also has a direct bearing on the START II treaty since it disrupts the strategic balance (or a situation close to balance) by making possible the siting of NATO (read U.S.) tactical nuclear weapons close to Russia's borders. Many people see resistance to such a NATO advance as linked to the problem of START II ratification. Fourth, there is the question of more economic assistance from the United States, since the cooperation to eliminate strategic offensive arms being carried out within the framework of the Nunn-Lugar program is not conducive to the fulfillment of treaties in the field of strategic offensive arms.

Whereas a solution to individual questions among those mentioned above is possible in the form of Russian Federation State Duma resolutions and decisions, the solution of others will not be achievable without additional talks with the Americans.

Russia: Yeltsin Welcomes UN Secretary General in Kremlin

LD1605120396 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0959 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 16 (Interfax) - President Boris Yeltsin today welcomed visiting U.N. Secretary-General Butrus Butrus Ghali in the Kremlin.

Yeltsin said Russia had felt in the past and felt today the support of the United Nations.

Russia, joining the ranks of "civilized countries," supported reforms in the United Nations and met the financial commitments it had made as a U.N. member, Yeltsin said.

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The welcoming ceremony was followed by a meeting held behind closed doors, in which the Russian delegation apart from Yeltsin included the president's international affairs aide Dmitriy Ryurikov, Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov and the representative at the United Nations, Yuliy Vorontsov.

Ryurikov told Interfax that Butrus Ghali's regular visits to Moscow above all meant recognition of Russia's status in the United Nations and that the secretary-general's intention to take part in a Commonwealth of Independent States summit opening on Friday meant recognition of the CIS's role as an influential regional organization of young independent states.

Ryurikov said Russia's participation in practically all peacekeeping missions was particularly important for the United Nations today and met with the approval of the entire world community.

Russia: Yeltsin, Butrus Ghali Discuss Russian-UN Ties

LD1605150796 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1440 16 May 96 GMT

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 16 (Itar-Tass) — The press service of the president of the Russian Federation released a report which says as follows:

"President of the Russian Federation Boris Yeltsin has received today Secretary-General of the United Nations Butrus Butrus Ghali.

"The sides exchanged views on a wide range of issues connected with the strengthening of cooperation between Russia and the United Nations.

"They also considered problems of the settlement of crises and conflicts in the Commonwealth countries. It was stressed that the peacemaking role of Russia was an important factor of world policy which could not be underestimated.

"The Russian side expressed concern about the condition of the Russian speaking population in Latvia and Estonia. The Secretary- General was told that Russia expects from the U.N. further steps to bring the condition of the Russian speaking population in these countries into line with the generally recognised norms of international law.

"Boris Yeltsin confirmed to the U.N. General Secretary that Russia would invariably back the efforts of the Organisation to maintain international peace and security, create conditions for just and equal cooperation among all states.

"The Russian side expressed intention to make an ever growing contribution to the U.N. activities in different directions.

"After almost two-hour meeting Boris Yeltsin acquainted U.N. Secretary-General with his official residence in the Kremlin and with architectural relics restored by Russian masters."

Russia: Chernomyrdin Meets UN Secretary General

LD1605170396 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1603 GMT 16 May 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Artem Protasenko]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 16 May — Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali tonight had a brief meeting at the House of Government. After the meeting, the UN secretary general told journalists that he had had a constructive dialogue with the Russian prime minister concerning future cooperation between Russia and the United Nations. Butrus-Ghali said that the presence of the Russian military in the framework of the UN peacekeeping forces in Tajikistan, Georgia, former Yugoslavia, Angola, on the borders between Iraq and Kuwait, and between Israel and Egypt reflects a significant role played by the Russian diplomacy both in the UN framework and in international politics.

In particular, the problem of refugees in Russia and in the Commonwealth of Independent States was discussed during the meeting. The UN secretary general had promised Viktor Chernomyrdin assistance in putting this issue on the agenda of the conference devoted to the problems of displaced persons that is due to take place in Geneva in May under the auspices of the United Nations.

Russia: Primakov, Butrus-Ghali Discuss Baltics, Iraq Sanctions

LD1605170996 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1646 GMT 16 May 96

[By Denis Perkin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW May 16 (Itar-Tass) — A thorough exchange of opinions on practical matters of the United Nations activity and Russia's interaction with the United Nations was held during a meeting on Wednesday between Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov and United Nations Secretary-General Butrus Butrus-Ghali now on an official visit in Moscow, Grigoriy Karasin, the Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman, said on Thursday.

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"Priority tasks in resolving conflicts in the area of the CIS and in other 'hot spots' were discussed from the viewpoint of the further consolidation of the United Nations role in maintaining international peace and security," Karasin said.

He said the Russian side emphasised the importance of stepping up the United Nations participation in upholding the rights of the Russian-speaking population in Estonia and Latvia, and solving problems of refugees and migrants in countries of the CIS and Baltic countries. Butrus-Ghali told Primakov about the main aspects of the activity of the United Nations Secreteriat and dwelt in detail on matters of reforming the U.N. to make it more effective.

Karasin said much attention was given to the Iraqi problem. The Russian side emphasised the need for an urgent and consistent solution to outstanding problems in the area and voiced a serious concern over the critical humanitarian situation in Iraq.

"It was noted in this connection that economic sanctions are not an end in itself and should be lessened as progress is achieved in the fulfilment of the Security Council decisions," Karasin said.

Russia closely follows the negotiations between the United Nations Secretariat and the Iraqi side for the implementation of the provisions of the humanitarian resolution 986, Karasin said. "We follow positive efforts taken in this direction, without interferring in the course of the talks as is stipulated by the Security Council's decisions," Karasin said.

He said that the "unconditional observance of the principle of Iraq's territorial integrity and sovereignty" is the indispensible condition for the negotiations' success.

During the negotiations Primakov reaffirmed Russia's adherence to painstaking observance of its obligations as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council and its intention to develop all round cooperation with the United Nations, Karasin said.

Russia: Butrus-Ghali: UN Cannot Drop Use of Force To Achieve Peace

LD1605190896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1659 GMT 16 May 96

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature: by diplomatic correspondents Aleksandr Korzun, Igor Porshnev, Yevgeniy Terekhov, and others]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 16 (Interfax) — The U.N. cannot drop the use of force from its arsenal of achieving peace, the leader of the international organization Butrus Butrus-Ghali declared at a round-table meeting on U.N.-Russian relations organized in Moscow Thursday at the initiative of the Russian inter-parliamentary group.

He said that force must be used in exceptional cases, when there is an evident aggressor, like in the event of the Iraqi aggression against Kuwait.

The U.N. leader admitted his organization does not have the means to impose peace. U.N. countries are not ready to sacrifice their sons in a war under the U.N. flag, so the U.N. is forced to give a mandate either to a group of countries, or to regional organizations so that they could conduct operations involving the use of force, Butrus-Ghali said.

Speaking of international sanctions he said there is a contradiction in the U.N. charter between sanctions as such and development as the main objective of the organization.

He said he has been working for two months on the Security Council resolution #986 concerning Iraq.

The Iraqi people suffer from international sanctions, but not the authorities, the international community wants to punish the authorities, not the people, Butrus-Ghali said. But how to find sanctions that would affect governments without affecting the people? Such formulas remain to be found, the U.N leader said.

Butrus-Ghali also raised the issue of making the U.N. structure more democratic and raised the question whether the Security Council represents the key figures in the international community.

"I would say something more revolutionary, namely that several states are today key figures in international politics and there are new figures — international corporations, members of parliament, non-government organizations, churches, what is called elements of civic society," Butrus-Ghali said.

He said Russia plays an extremely important role in the international community. He welcomed the fact that despite its financial difficulties Russia has paid its regular contribution to the U.N. budget. According to Butrus-Ghali, the international community experiences one of its deepest financial crises. Most countries do not pay their fees regularly or fully. He said their combined debt exceeds $2.9 billion. He also said the U.N. is forced to reduce its personnel by almost 1,000 in the next six months due to financial difficulties.

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Russia: Yeltsin Favors 'Tactical Pause' in Expansion of Union

LD1605141596 Moscow Interfax in English 1358 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 16 (Interfax) — The expansion of the four-party union between Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan should not be stepped up, Russian President Boris Yeltsin proposed at the CIS Interstate Council Thursday.

"The four states who took up this task should first stand on their feet themselves and only then invite other countries to work jointly," he said.

"A tactical pause in the admission of new members should be made, no one should be pulled into this association," Yeltsin said. "The other CIS states may be invited to this community as soon as the machine goes smoothly."

The implementation of the four-party union should be started with health care, education, human rights and social protection of the population, Yeltsin said.

Russia: Governor Rebuts Dep Minister on PRC Border

MM1705103496 Moscow TRUD in Russian 16 May 96 p 4

[Article by Maritime Kray Governor Yevgeniy Nazdratenko under the "Polemic" rubric: "Mist Over the Misty River"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Our newspaper has repeatedly touched on the complex issue of the Russian-Chinese border. It was broached, in particular, in a TRUD interview with Igor Rogachev, the Russian Federation's ambassador to Beijing (4 January 1996). Aleksandr Panov, deputy minister of foreign affairs, has provided a detailed explanation of this problem (24 April 1996). Our readers know about the contents of the five-nation agreement on confidence in the military sphere in the border region, which was concluded in Shanghai by the leaders of Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan (5 May 1996). We also provided information on the Russian-Chinese declaration signed in Beijing during Boris Yeltsin's recent visit (TRUD 26 April 1996). That document confirmed the accords by the Russian Federation and the PRC to strictly abide by the agreements on the state border in its eastern and western sections and the intention to continue talks with a view to the just and rational resolution of the outstanding border questions. Today the governor of Maritime Kray expresses his viewpoint and disputes, in particular, some of the points made by Aleksandr Panov.

Vladivostok — "In any case, China gains no outlet to the sea," A. Panov, deputy minister of foreign affairs, demonstrates the little value to Russia of the territories being handed over. "The Tumannaya [Misty] River is shallow, the depths are insignificant, and not just ships but even boats pass with difficulty." As regards the Tumannaya's shallowness, we invite Aleksandr Nikolayevich to try to ford this "stream...." Now let us open the 1991 agreement between the USSR and the PRC, in accordance with which demarcation work is being carried out. Let us read Article 9: "The Soviet side agrees, insofar as it is concerned, that Chinese vessels (under the PRC flag) may sail along the Tumannaya (Tumenjiang) River below the 33d border point mentioned in Article 2 of this agreement, with outlet to the sea and back again."

I will explain: The 33d border point is in the region of Lake Khasan and the Zaozernaya Volcano on the bank of the Tumannaya River. Under the agreement we lose this piece of land. Our deputy minister rejects the very possibility of China's building a port in that region: "This is a fantasy." On the contrary, it is a fantasy to think that China's northeastern provinces do not need an outlet to the sea. I do not suspect our great neighbor of any ill intent, but there is the logic of national interests and the logic of economic development.

In my view the diplomat's historical references are also unconvincing. For example: "From the viewpoint of all the documents it is obvious that a 300-hectare plot in Ussuriyskiy Rayon must pass to China." First, the area is not 300 hectares but 968. Second, what are the documents in question? The Russian-Chinese protocol with a precise description of the border in this section is preserved in the archives in Moscow. It was signed and sealed by plenipotentiaries of China and Russia 20 September 1886. It was then that a stone pillar with the letter "P" was set up, by mutual consent, by Hun-Ch'un Regimental Commander Nem-Giye-Nem [name as transliterated]. It has stood on the same spot for over 100 years, and no disputes have arisen over this section during these years. There is also a ruling by an interdepartmental commission set up by the USSR Council of Ministers in February 1983 to conduct a unilateral check of the border with the PRC and to prepare materials for joint definition of the border. Professionals from various departments worked for several years, used aerial photographs and the most modern instruments, and studied historical and legal documents — and in 1986 they delivered an official ruling: The sections in the region of Letter "P" in Ussuriyskiy Rayon and in the region of the Tumannaya River in Khasanskiy Rayon belong to the Soviet Union (and thus to Russia).

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The purport of Article 5 of the 1991 agreement is as follows: The precise positions of the line of the border will be specifically determined in the course of demarcation work. This is the mechanism whereby we have a real possibility of correcting the shortcomings of the 1991 agreement, while in no way exacerbating bilateral relations with the PRC. Let scientists and specialists meet and try to prove to each other that they are right; let mutual consultations and talks be held. After all, how many arguments has the section of the border in Maritime Kray's Khankayskiy Rayon caused? A solution has nonetheless been found. Even though the demarcation line was drawn differently to the way envisaged in the 1991 agreement, both we and the Chinese are satisfied. Why can we not do in Khasanskiy Rayon what was done in Khankayskiy Rayon? After all, the demarcation of 17 km of the border with the DPRK, which was meant to take 2.5 years, has now been going on for 11 years and is still not complete. But in Maritime Kray it is necessary to demarcate 1,500 km.

Maritime Kray Administration has never raised the question of denouncing the 1991 agreement. Admittedly, we do not consider it the acme of the art of diplomacy (unlike, say, the 1860 Treaty of Peking), and we see its many weak points, but it is an official document. Therefore, it is possible, I believe, to settle all disputed questions relating to the Russian-Chinese border only on the basis of this agreement, using the mechanisms enshrined in it.

We must leave to future generations the most precisely checked border possible and rule out the slightest grounds for territorial claims. Otherwise in 10 or 20 years time somebody in Russia or China will find a mistake on the map and will say: Let us survey the border again. Who needs this? It is no coincidence that the demarcation group under the leadership of General V. Rozov scrupulously checked the border and returned dozens of times to sections that give rise to doubt. There were instances where mistakes in our favor were detected, but not once, as far as I know, did our people yield to the temptation to "seize a little piece" of Chinese land.

We are creating a **border of friendship with the PRC**, and mutual concessions are needed. This is stated in Article 1 of the 1991 agreement, it was implied in the course of Russian President B. Yeltsin's official visit to China in April of this year, and it is also happening in life. The Chinese are ready to compromise. Take, for example, the episode concerning the burial site of the heroes of Khasan. In the course of talks our neighbors, respecting the memory of the Soviet servicemen who defended the Soviet Union's independence and China's freedom, agreed to move the proposed line of the border toward themselves.

Now about "high politics" and my right to speak out on this subject. The Russian Constitution states that the fulfillment of the Russian Federation's international treaties is in the joint jurisdiction of the Russian Federation and its components (Article 72). Therefore I have expressed and will express my opinion on "high politics" to the president of Russia only if it concerns Maritime Kray. Naturally, I do not aspire to an independent role in the state's foreign policy; it is just that sometimes it is necessary to tell the truth about what are, in our view, miscalculations by professional diplomats.

I have been and will be a consistent advocate of the theory that Russia's foreign policy should really be presidential, as it is under the constitution. Unfortunately, people have too frequently faced the president with a fait accompli, later absolving themselves of all responsibility for mistakes, and have sometimes simply sabotaged his directives.

Judge for yourselves. The president issues a directive on the coordination of foreign policy, but ex-Minister A. Kozyrev writes in his memoirs: "I constantly and doggedly opposed the growth of all sorts of foreign policy coordinating mechanisms, such as the Security Council, say." The president issues a directive which makes it incumbent to complete the demarcation work on the eastern section of the border "in strict accordance with the 1991 agreement between the USSR and the PRC." But certain officials, ignoring Article 5 of the agreement, hasten to give up Russian lands, essentially distorting the president's position.

Thanks to Yeltsin's personal participation in very important talks, we managed to avoid outstanding flops. I believe that thanks to Ye. Primakov's appointment as head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs we will succeed in avoiding mistakes in the future. Many people have already felt the new minister's powerful grasp in his very first steps. The Russian Federation president's very necessary edict of 12 March 1996 "On the Coordinating Role of the Russian Federation Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Pursuing the Russian Federation's Unified Foreign Policy Line" has been issued. In my opinion, this is a serious step toward the consistent implementation of a truly national foreign policy platform.

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Russia: Yeltsin Wants All Documents Agreed To Before Visiting Kiev

LD1705103696 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1011 GMT 17 May 96

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondents Denis Perkin and Valeriy Sevryukov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 17 May — Answering journalists' questions regarding his visit to Ukraine, which has been postponed on more than one occasion, Russian President Boris Yeltsin stated at today's news conference on the outcome of the CIS summit:

"I am not going to go on an excursion, I have visited Ukraine more than once, and I am interested not in excursions but in a large-scale political visit that would include the signing of a comprehensive treaty between Ukraine and the Russian Federation, which so far does not exist."

"Such a visit will be possible after all the documents to be signed there have been finally agreed," the Russian president noted. "So far the issue of the Black Sea Fleet has not been totally resolved. I very much hope that today I and Leonid Danylovych Kuchma will manage to come to a final agreement." "There is only one issue left out of the 10 points of this treaty. Should we agree on this, I will immediately go to Kiev," President Boris Yeltsin stressed.

Russia: 'Pro-Russian Slant' Seen in Armenian Policy

MM1605122896 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 16 May 96 p 2

[Report by Boris Mkrtchyan: "'Russian Assault' on Armenia Has Not Been Ignored"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yerevan — Armenia is possibly the only CIS republic obliged to rigorously observe the rules of the "parity game" in its foreign policy today. This is confirmed by the events of recent weeks. In this period Yerevan has managed to sign a number of documents with the European Union and with NATO and also welcome a whole "landing party" of high-ranking Russian statesmen to Armenia. Today it is hard to remember when this small Transcaucasian republic welcomed such a large number of important guests in such a short period.

The official visits began with V. Serov, Russian Federation minister for cooperation with the CIS member states, who held talks with the Armenian leadership regarding the creation of joint financial-industrial groups, the galvanization of trade between the two countries, and the resumption of defense enterprises' activity. Then Defense Minister Pavel Grachev, with whom 13 agreements were signed, was welcomed here. Grachev was followed to Yerevan by a State Duma delegation led by Speaker G. Seleznev, which also found time to meet with Armenian Communist Party leaders. Just the next day Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov took the Duma members' place.

At this time Armenian President Ter-Petrosyan had been meeting in Moscow with Premier Viktor Chernomyrdin and President Boris Yeltsin, with whom he discussed questions of drafting and signing an Armenian-Russian Treaty on Friendship and Cooperation.

It was clear that the West could not ignore this pro-Russian slant in Armenian foreign policy. And the West did respond: The WASHINGTON POST reported that the U.S. Government in its UN report had indicated that "this year Armenia will become one of the planet's 'hot spots.'" Is that a warning [predosterezheniye] or a preemptive move [preduprezhdeniye]?

Today, when it is hard to predict the results of the Russian presidential election, the Western powers are not sparing efforts to keep the Transcaucasian and Central Asian republics from entering into close contacts with Moscow. The fact that over three-fourths of Armenia's population associate their country's future with Russia is also playing an important role here. According to "Eurobarometer" [not further identified], this is the highest figure for pro-Russian orientation among the peoples of the former socialist camp.

Russia: Kazakh President Prepared To Mediate Chechen Settlement

LD1605170896 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1640 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 16 (Interfax) — Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev told a news conference in the INTERFAX main office in Moscow Thursday [16 May] that he is prepared to act as a mediator in the Chechen settlement.

However, he said he did not receive such an invitation either from Moscow or from the Chechen side. He recalled that Tatarstan President Mintimer Shaymiyev had already announced an end to his mediation in the conflict settlement.

Nazarbayev said he discussed a visit to Chechnya by the Russian president at a meeting with Boris Yeltsin in the Kremlin earlier Thursday. He said he advised Yeltsin that he make the visit if it can resolve anything. According to him, a visit to Chechnya by Yeltsin would be expedient "if it is possible to meet with rebels, provide them security guarantees, sit down with them

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at a negotiating table. Maybe this could be done not necessarily in Chechnya but somewhere near here."

In addition, Nazarbayev said it is necessary to establish who is the real successor to Chechen separatist leader Dzhokhar Dudayev, if the latter is really dead, and with whom to hold talks.

Russia: Border Force Chief Rebuts Georgian, Armenian Charges

MM1605154396 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 16 May 96 p 3

[Interview with Major General Vladimir Vozzhayev, commander of the "Gruziya" Group of Forces of the Caucasian Special Border District, by Captain Vladimir Mokhov; date and place not given: "Who Resents the Presence of Russian Border Guards in Transcaucasia?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Mokhov] Vladimir Ivanovich, the Georgian parliament and the Armenian parliament-in-exile periodically issue various statements on the allegedly unlawful actions of Russian border guards. What is the substance of these complaints?

[Vozzhayev] As for the recent statement of Major General Valeriy Chkheidze, commander of the Georgian Border Troops, at a session of his republic's parliament, the complaints he made amount to just one thing: a demand for ships arriving in Abkhazia to be compulsorily escorted under convoy for customs inspection in the Georgian port of Poti. But this is nothing other than a desire to assign police functions to Russian border guards. However, in accordance with Russian-Georgian agreements, units of the "Gruziya" forces group are not obliged to convoy ships for border or customs inspection in various ports. To examine them on the spot — that is our function.

[Mokhov] ...But it was precisely on this account that the Abkhazian Supreme Council (in exile) dropped you a big hint, stating that "Russian Border Troops subunits are deliberately breaching their commitments by allowing Abkhazian separatists to convey into the autonomous republic, and possibly other regions as well, mercenaries, weapons, and ammunition in order to prepare for new combat operations."

[Vozzhayev] I hear such statements fairly often, and, to be honest, I am fed up with refuting them. Because no one can say definitely that on such-and-such a ship on such-and-such a date so many gunmen arrived carrying arms and ammunition. But I can give a detailed report on each ship: when it arrived, what it was carrying, who arrived on it, and with what documents. And I take full responsibility for stating that there has not been a single incident of the conveyance of weapons, ammunition, or gunmen, or any banned materials. Ship inspections are carried out very thoroughly, up to and including the opening of every drawer, every box, every cabin, and every stateroom.

[Mokhov] Vladimir Ivanovich, please throw some light on the recent events in the population center of Borisakho which triggered the latest protest from the Georgian side.

[Vozzhayev] Events in Chechnya today are developing in such a way that the gunmen have been squeezed from every side. If you look at the map, it is obvious that one of their possible paths of retreat is across the border with Georgia. Formerly, there were practically no border subunits there at all. Only last year did the Georgian state department post a number of border guard detachments, which now serve in this sector and cover the most likely routes by which bandit formations will try to cross onto the republic's territory. Naturally, the possibility of such an incursion alarms not only the Georgian but also the Russian leadership. Moreover, this sector is of strategic importance to Georgia. It is the location of the Zhinvani Hydroelectric Power Station, whose seizure would allow gunmen to dictate terms to the whole republic. Also, the Georgian Military Highway passes through this area — one of the few road links with Russia.

We are training our reserves in order to be prepared to repulse a possible attack and, with the permission of the Georgian government, to afford aid to the Georgian border guards. And for this training to be effective, they must know the terrain and the region in which they may have to operate.

One border detachment has been brought up from the reserve in order to carry out mountain training exercises and study the potential theater in this sector. It has arrived in the area. The leadership of the population center of Borisakho indicated where and how it should be stationed. A field camp was organized which was in no one's way. We did not post border details and obstructed no one in the performance of any activity, occupying ourselves exclusively with training for combat operations in mountain conditions.

Incidentally, we also have the appropriate bilateral agreements for such operations. The furor in parliament was raised by those who altogether object to the presence of Russian border troops in Transcaucasia.

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Russia: ITAR-TASS Details Georgian Accord With South Ossetia

LD1605150496 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1434 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW May 16 (Itar-Tass) — Representatives of Georgia, South Ossetia, as well as of Russia, the Republic of North Ossetia-Alania and of OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe] signed on Thursday in the Kremlin the memorandum "On measures for security and confidence-building between the sides in the Georgian-Ossetian conflict". In accordance with the memorandum the sides pledged themselves to "refrain from the use of force or threat of force, from political, economic and other pressure on each other."

Georgia and South Ossetia assumed the obligation to take "every necessary measure to avert any unlawful actions and infringement of rights of persons under the ethnic principle". They intend to take "real measures to duly resolve the problem of refugees and displaced persons who suffered as a result of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict".

The sides agreed that "persons who participated in the armed conflict but did not commit war crimes nor crimes against civilian population are not to be prosecuted". The sides are shortly going to create the necessary conditions for the work of law enforcement bodies to investigate these crimes and punish those guilty.

Under the memorandum, "with the advance to the full-scale settlement, the zone of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict will be demilitarised stage-by-stage on a basis of special arrangements, and peacekeeping forces will be able to stay in the demilitarised zone". The memorandum envisages that the sides will continue negotiations to achieve a full-scale political settlement.

The parties that signed the memorandum commended Russia's readiness to be a guarantor of the implementation of the arrangements reached in the memorandum and the readiness, of the Republic of North Ossetia-Alania to participate in their implementation and of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe to promote this.

The memorandum which came into force as of today emphasises the intention of the sides "to eliminate the aftermaths of the conflict and to restore relations of peace and mutual respect among them." Georgia and South Ossetia are convinced of the need "to put an end to a difficult legacy of the recent years and take to the road leading to peace, confidence and accord".

They confirmed their adherence to the provisions of the UN Charter, to the fundamental principles and decisions of the OSCE, and to the generally recognised norms of international law. The sides stated the readiness to settle conflicts in the spirit of mutual respect and by political means only.

The memorandum once again expresses satisfaction that military actions of the zone of the conflict were stopped in July 1992 on a basis of the Agreement on the principles of settling Georgian-Ossetian conflict and the bringing in of mixed peacekeeping forces.

The memorandum "On measures for ensuring security and confidence-building between the sides in the Georgian-Ossetian conflict" signed in the Kremlin on Thursday is assessed by independent observers as an important initial step toward the ultimate settlement of relations between the two countries, Itar-Tass notes.

It is essential that the signatories of the memorandum pledged themselves to refrain from the use of force in settling disputed problems.

At the same time it is noted that the memorandum does not define the status of South Ossetia. It is precisely the fact that this vital question remains unresolved that prompted the Georgian-Ossetian conflict. Perhaps, this problem was deliberately omitted during the drafting of the memorandum which is to lay down the basis for a full-scale Georgian-Ossetian settlement.

Georgia eliminated the autonomous status of South Ossetia in December 1990. This prompted a reply demarche: Tskhinvali proclaimed South Ossetia part of the USSR. The independence of South Ossetia was proclaimed after the USSR's break-up. Then a Georgian-Ossetian conflict flared up.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin who was present at the signing of the memorandum described the event as historic.

Russia: General Says Peacekeepers To Play No Role in Tajik Clashes

LD1605115196 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0926 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 16 (Interfax) - Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the Russian ground forces Lt.-Gen. Aleksandr Sokolov, leading a group of senior officers of the ground forces' General Staff to Dushanbe, has said that Russian troops will play no part in the recent clashes in Tajikistan.

The armed clashes between Tajik government troops and opposition forces are "an internal affair of Tajikistan and the Russian peacekeepers have no intention of meddling in them," Col.-Gen. Vladimir Semyonov, Sokolov's immediate superior, told Interfax.

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The visit to Tajikistan was planned well in advance and has nothing to do with the escalation of tension, Semyonov said.

The military aim to see whether Russia's 201st motorized rifle division will be ready to launch a summer training program, on June 1.

Russia's 201st division is protecting and prepared to defend its own compounds and the critical facilities of Tajikistan. It will play no role in combat engagements, Semyonov stressed.

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Political Issues

Russia: Yeltsin Sends Conclusion on Draft 1997 Budget to Duma

LD1605200296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1819 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 16 (Itar-Tass) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin has sent his conclusion on the draft of the federal law "On the procedure of introducing, review and approval of the Federal Budget for the year 1997", the Presidential press service told Itar-Tass today. In a letter addressed to chairman of the State Duma Gennadiy Seleznev, Boris Yeltsin pointed out that the draft lacks a number of issues of legal and substantial nature. In particular, article 1 of the draft, the list of documents submitted by the Russian government to the State Duma in conformance with article 10 of the draft, main directions of the budget and tax policy of the Russian Federation for 1997 should be added.

The number of subjects, to which the draft Federal Budget for 1997 is being sent, in conformance with article 7 of the draft, the President of Russia as a guarantor of the Constitution of the Russian Federation should be added, the letter further stated.

The necessity of sending the bill to The President of the Russian Federation is also confirmed by the norm of article 11, which envisages within a period of 15 days sending to the subjects rights of the legislative initiative of the draft Federal Law "On the Federal Budget for the year 1997".

Russia: Yeltsin Orders Phasing Out of Death Penalty

LD1605150096 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1428 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 16 (Interfax) — President Boris Yeltsin on Thursday issued a decree to phase out capital punishment following Russia's entry into the Council of Europe, Yeltsin's press office said.

The Russian government is given a month in which to put forward a bill in parliament on Russia's adherence to Protocol 6 of November 22, 1984, of the European convention on human rights and freedoms of November 4, 1950.

The two houses of the Federal Assembly are recommended to speed up the adoption of the Criminal, Judicial and Punishment Codes and discuss the possibility of cutting the number of offences entailing the death penalty.

The Interior Ministry is given three months in which to put forward proposals to bring conditions of treatment into line with United Nations-accepted minimal standards for prisoners facing the death penalty and those whose death sentence was replaced by life imprisonment.

The prosecutor general is recommended to tighten control of the execution of laws on the conditions of treatment of prisoners convinced of capital punishment and those whose death sentence was replaced by a lifetime jail term.

Russia: Premier Says Nothing Done To Safeguard Deceived Depositors

LD1605121996 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1014 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 16 (Interfax) — The Russian government today voiced displeasure with how the Cabinet's Commission on Securities and Stock has been implementing presidential instructions to protect the rights of deceived depositors and shareholders.

Presiding over a cabinet session, Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin took the commission led by Dmitriy Vasilyev to task and called for disbanding all the illegally formed economic structures.

Chernomyrdin admitted part of his government's blame for "letting the people be confused and be caught in a trap set up by unscrupulous dealers."

Chernomyrdin dismissed activity by the commission as mere talk instead of action.

He instructed First Deputy Prime Minister Vladimir Kadannikov to draft bills by the end of May that would curb abuses by unscrupulous businessmen and to submit these bills to the State Duma for debate.

Chernomyrdin also called for suspension of all the illegally formed law-breaking businesses, which, he said, "should be issued with new licences and only then be allowed to resume business."

Such a decision could be adopted in the form of an appropriate cabinet resolution or a presidential decree.

Kadannikov was also instructed to prepare a joint session to discuss the implementation of the presidential decree on safeguarding the rights of investors and shareholders. The prime minister scheduled this meeting for next week, with not only representatives of the Commission on Securities and Stock but also officials of the Central Bank, Finance and Economics Ministries to take part.

Chernomyrdin flatly refuted arguments by commission Chairman Vasilyev that this federal body has drafted

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appropriate papers for the Cabinet. These documents have been forwarded to the Cabinet with much delay, without necessary coordination and have in fact "been dumped rather than introduced," the prime minister said.

Russia: Reason Advanced for Chernomyrdin Absence From Duma Session

MK1605121296 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 16 May 96 p 3

[Report by Yevgeniy Yuryev: "The Communists' 'Premier' Scenario Has Failed To Materialize"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Viktor Chernomyrdin's no-show at the State Duma came as a surprise, both to the deputies and to First Deputy Premier Kadannikov, who stood in for him on the Duma podium. Shortly before the session the premier, in discussing his upcoming meeting with the deputies with the Duma speaker, became concerned whether the parliamentarians would manage to return from their constituencies in time for the parliamentary session — even proposing that the government's report be moved to Friday. The CPRF faction was making especially thorough preparations for the session, planning to use Yavlinskiy's motion for a vote of no confidence in the government as a springboard for some of its more cunning schemes.

On Tuesday afternoon Gennadiy Seleznev, in the course of yet another meeting with the premier at a session of the State Commission on Chechnya, received confirmation from him that on Wednesday he would address the Duma without fail. Yet, only a couple of hours later, Chernomyrdin's plans changed. He said that he would not be able to make it because at the designated time he would be busy carrying out a presidential order. What is the reason for such an abrupt change in the premier's plans?

Apparently, by the time a final decision about showing up at the Duma was to be made, both the premier and the president had received reports of same-day sessions of certain Duma factions that were preparing to use the unfavorable situation with regard to the budget execution for their own election purposes, and [the president and the premier] decided to scuttle the Duma-designed scenario.

Yavlinskiy insisted on giving the government a vote of no confidence, in spite of a skeptical attitude to his idea by some Yabloko members. The Communists, however, did not approve of that idea. According to our sources, the CPRF is not interested in the premier's being replaced either before, or even after, the elections. Moreover, informed sources in the CPRF faction indicated to your KOMMERSANT-DAILY correspondent that, should their candidate be elected president, they would prefer to keep the core of the present government intact. At least for the six months following the elections; that is, until the political situation stabilizes and power finally passes into their hands. People in the faction, however, passed over in silence the government's reaction to this, although it was indicated that work was in progress on "conditioning" the technocrats. Whatever the case might be, until now the Communists did not particularly want the government's blood. Neither did they intend to pull chestnuts out of the fire for Yavlinskiy, who aspires, if not to the presidency, then at least to the premiership.

A more treacherous design could be discerned in the CPRF's actions; that is, to play the president off against the premier. According to our sources the CPRF "crowd scene" was to adhere to the following scenario: Through a series of tricky questions they would provoke Chernomyrdin into losing his temper when defending the government and saying something insulting about the president; for instance, that responsibility for decision making lies with the president, while the government is only an executive agency. They were going to ask the premier, for example, how independent he is in his decision making and how fully he briefs the president about the situation in the country. In other words, the Communists were planning to confront the premier with this dilemma: Either he had to assume the entire responsibility for the state of things in the country or "surrender" the president. Chernomyrdin's absence upset those plans.

Why did the Communists need that squabble at the top. First, it would surely have affected Boris Yeltsin's rating. Second, it cannot be ruled out that the Zyuganovites, afraid of taking on responsibility for the economy immediately after the elections (and wishing to retain only ideological leadership), have begun to "fight for Chernomyrdin," his technocrats, and influential business circles. These, however, are merely suppositions. What is certain is only that Grigoriy Yavlinskiy, with his latest government censure motion, could have played into the Communists' hands.

Media Issues

Russia: Press Congress Claims Journalists' Rights Still Limited

LD1605122196 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1105 GMT 16 May 96

[By Tamara Ivanova]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 16 (Itar-Tass) — A Russian Free Press Congress open here on Thursday with the lighting of commemorative candles

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near the photographic portraits of slain journalists and with a minute of silence. The Congress is held for the fifth time and has drawn more than 250 media representatives from all regions of Russia.

Vsevolod Bogdanov, Chairman of the Journalists' Union of Russia (JUR), when declaring the Congress open, announced the start of an international inquiry into the circumstances of the tragic death of Obschaya Gazeta correspondent Nadezhda Chaykova in Chechnya. The inquiry will be made under the auspices of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, the International Federation of Journalists and the JUR.

The rights of journalists and the freedom of the press are still being encroached upon, stated JUR Secretary Pavel Gutiontov. He related that at Wednesday's parliamentary readings on the country's Information Security Concept, a number of participants suggested instituting a Federal Committee on the Protection of State Secrets in the Press.

Recalling the attempt to introduce a preliminary censorship following the 1993 events, the JUR Secretary voiced apprehensions that "it would be quite easy to reverse the march of history" upon an unfavourable outcome of June's presidential elections. He called on those present, when casting votes at the elections, to deny trust to those who are capable of limiting the Russian people's Constitutional right to get credible and complete information.

The Congress was also addressed by Grigoriy Yakovlev, Editor-in-Chief of Obshchaya Gazeta, Yuriy Yakutin, Editor-in-Chief of the Economy and Life weekly, Aleksandr Nekhoroshev, director of the Russian television news network, and by media representatives from many a region.

President Boris Yeltsin has sent a message of greetings to participants in the Congress. The message points out, in particular, that the journalistic forum is being held at the time which is crucial to Russia, since, at the presidential elections, which are only one month away, the following vital issue will be decided upon: "whether the country will proceed along the road of reforms or will turn backwards".

In the light of this, "it is utterly essential for all those, who cherish the ideals of democracy and freedom, to unite", the Head of State emphasised.

"The triumph of democracy and the formation of new Russia are much to the credit of the Russian press. Now, it is again faced with the need to meet the challenge of the times again. You have immense possibilities and I hope that you will avail yourselves of them," Yeltsin pointed out, promising to continue to exercise all his powers to protect the freedom of mass media".

Military & Space Issues

Russia: 'Text' of Yeltsin Edict Abolishing Military Conscription

LD1705083196 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1446 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 16 May (ITAR-TASS) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin issued an edict today "On changing over to staffing the ranks of private and sergeant in the armed forces and in other troops of the Russian Federation on a professional basis." The text of the edict which has been received by ITAR-TASS reads:

"In order to increase the prestige of servicemen and the prestige of military service, to modernize the army and increase its combat readiness, and in accordance with the main directions of military reform in the Russian Federation, I decree:

"1. The armed forces and other troops of the Russian Federation are to go over, from spring 2000, to staffing the ranks of private and sergeant on the basis of voluntary recruitment of citizens into military service on contract, with the abolition of compulsory conscription for military service; the draft procedure for citizens of the Russian Federation to enter military service on contract is to be completed by 2000.

"2. The Government of the Russian Federation is to present to the president of the Russian Federation before 1 December 1996:

(a) a system of measures to provide incentives for the recruitment of citizens for military service in the ranks of private and sergeant on contract;

(b) draft laws on introducing amendments and additions to the existing legislation to facilitate the change-over to military service on a professional basis.

3. It is to be established that on drawing up the draft federal budget for the coming year, starting with the draft federal budget for 1997, priority financing is to be given to measures to facilitate the recruitment of citizens for military service in the ranks of private and sergeant on contract."

Russia: Military Prosecutor on Army Crime, Chechnya Investigation

MM1705110496 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 16 May 96 p 2

[Interview with Lieutenant General of Justice Valentin Panichev, Russian deputy general prosecutor and chief

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military prosecutor, by Ivan Ivanyuk and Oleg Getmanenko under the "Meetings in the Editorial Offices" rubric; date not given: "A Prosecutor Is Not Just an Accuser"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The organs of the military prosecutor's office have recently found themselves increasingly at the epicenter of events — now Chechnya, now other "hot spots," now emergencies on a Russia-wide scale. Interest in the work of the jurists in shoulderboards has grown immeasurably in recent times.

Lieutenant General of Justice Valentin Panichev, Russian deputy general prosecutor and chief military prosecutor, recently dropped into the editorial offices and answered questions from KRASNAYA ZVEZDA journalists. [passage omitted]

[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA] Valentin Nikolayevich, what is the crime situation in the Armed Forces?

[Panichev] Let me cite the latest figures. In all the forces under the supervision of the military prosecutor's office within the various power structures, a total of more than 5,500 crimes have been committed this year. The increase in crime compared with the same period of last year is 9.9 percent. If you take just the Armed Forces, this indicator, on the contrary, fell by 7 percent.

Last year 30,000 crimes were recorded. Is this a large or a small figure? In general the level of crime in the Armed Forces is several times lower than in the country, and hence I would leave claims that criminal lawlessness reigns in the Army to the consciences of certain journalists. Thus, a figure plucked from who knows where crops up in one publication after another: 40,000-50,000 servicemen are killed in the Army every year. That is a lie. Last year more than 2,000 people were killed; that is from all causes, including accidents while on leave, for instance. But when I meet with soldiers' mothers, I cannot say: Not many are killed — this phrase would in itself sound blasphemous. A son should return from the Army to his mother alive and well.

Incidentally, we long ago gave all parents of deceased servicemen access to the proceedings of the investigation. We permit even something that is not stipulated by legislation — we allow them to study the material of the forensic medical investigation and take part in the study of the causes and circumstances that led to their son's death. We always require investigators to check all the possibilities in the case of fatalities. In some accident cases we produce up to 14 volumes of material. And today we do not hear demands from soldiers' mothers to abolish the military prosecutor's organs; on the contrary, they call for them to be strengthened.

[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA] KRASNAYA ZVEZDA wrote some time ago that there is an alarming tendency toward increasing crime among officers. Is this continuing?

[Panichev] Unfortunately, yes. The number of thefts of property is growing steadily. Instituting criminal proceedings in which the value of the stolen goods or the estimated loss from criminal activity exceeds 1 billion rubles has become an almost routine affair. The rank of persons subjected to criminal prosecution is also rising, unfortunately.

For example, the former chief of the Air Defense Troops Rear Services was recently arrested for theft and for abuse of office, having had his personal apartment decorated at state expense.

Bribery is becoming more and more widespread, particularly in military commissariats. In Lipetsk there is a criminal investigation into Colonel V. Chesnokov, military commissar of Lipetsk Oblast's Gryazinskiy Rayon. He is accused of filling out service cards with fictitious military service records and issuing them to persons of draft age in return for a certain recompense.

[KRASNAYA ZVEZDA] As has already been reported, the Main Military Prosecutor's Office has instituted criminal proceedings in connection with the deaths of a large group of servicemen from the 245th Motorized Infantry Regiment. The guilt of the commanding officers will also be determined. How can a commander fight, knowing that he could face criminal prosecution for this or that step? Where is the limit?

[Panichev] On the question of the events of 16 April, a criminal investigation has been launched into the deaths of the men, not against a specific person. In determining the degree of blame attached to the commander the results of the departmental investigation and the conclusions of experts will be taken into account. Was he guilty of negligence, could he have foreseen the tragic consequences? Depending on this, his actions come under the heading of criminal, disciplinary, or administrative liability. [passage omitted]

Russia: Causes of Soyuz 'Spy' Rocket Crash Detailed

MM1705080396 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 17 May 96 p 2

[Report by Sergey Leskov: "How and Why Our 'Spy' Satellite Was Destroyed"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The causes of Tuesday's accident involving the Soyuz-U launcher, which was to have put a Cosmos satellite into orbit, have become known.

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In addition to the traditional order from the Russian Defense Ministry, the satellite was due to carry out an order for the American company Aerial Image to photograph 3 million square kilometers of the Earth.

IZVESTIYA possesses reliable information that fragments of the rocket, which, according to an official report, fell in Siberia, have already been located 160 kilometers north of the Kazakhstan city of Dzhezkazgan. The first report was probably due to a reluctance to arouse the somewhat subsided "anti-Baykonur" mood in Kazakhstan.

This was the first spy satellite of ours partly purchased by the Americans. The satellite was to have operated in orbit for six weeks; each photograph taken by it is worth approximately $1,000. It is interesting that U.S. specialists calculate that they are two to three years behind Russia in space photographic reconnaissance. The space photographic survey resolves down to an area of 2 meters. The efficiency is zero: The film is delivered into space on a craft of Gagarin vintage. But its value lies in its augmentation of a photographic archive collected over decades, which is kept at the Main Intelligence Directorate [GRU]. Incidentally, the official exchange of 25 years' worth of photographic information between the GRU and the CIA gets under way this summer.

On the other hand, the United States has significantly outstripped Russia in modern electro-optical reconnaissance, which is notable for its high efficiency and great resolving power. However, nothing is heard of cooperation in that sphere.

It has been established that the accident was due to the premature release of the nose cone 49 seconds into the flight instead of at the 171st second as scheduled. The rocket began to wobble and pitch violently, and the automatic system shut down the second-stage motors at the 124th second. This is the first such occurrence involving a fairing since an accident in 1969, as a result of which the first Soviet Lunokhod remained on the Earth.

This is the third accident involving a Russian launcher this year. And is a sorry record for our country's space program, which beats last year's "achievement" of two accidents in 33 launches. By comparison, in 1995 the United States carried out 26 successful launches out of 30; all 11 of France's were successful; China had one accident in three launches; and Japan scored one out of two.

But although the dynamics of Russian accidents do worry our foreign partners, who have placed abundant orders for Russian launchers, the next launch — on the same Soyuz-U rocket — will be in July, when monkeys will be flying into space aboard the Bion satellite as part of the Russian-U.S. space program.

Federal Assembly

Russia: Duma to Assess Legality of Yeltsin Edict on Conscription

LD1705084596 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0837 GMT 17 May 96

[By Ivan Novikov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 17 (Itar-Tass) — The Russian State Duma instructed its committee for defence to give a legal assessment of President Boris Yeltsin's decree on transferring the Russian army to a contract basis by the spring of the year 2000.

On Thursday, Yeltsin ordered to end military conscription in the year 2000.

The decree binds agencies concerned to take measures to raise the prestige of military service and attract more young people to join the army by contract as privates and sergeants.

Russia: Information Security Concept Attacks Basic Freedoms

MM1505133796 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 16 May 96 p 1

[Report by Nikita Vaynonen under the "By the Way" rubric: "Specter of Agitprop Abroad in the State Duma"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Russian Federation State Duma Committee on Security has held parliamentary hearings on "The Mass Media in the Information Security System." The people invited to attend — over 180 deputies, officials from presidential and government structures, scientists, lawyers, and journalists — were given a document entitled "Concept of the Russian Federation's Information Security." This document reads literally as follows: "The prevention and neutralization of threats to information security in the sphere of intellectual life require first and foremost the open proclamation of a state, official ideology."

Let me remind you that Article 13 of the Russian Federation Constitution says: "1. In the Russian Federation ideological diversity is recognized. 2. **No ideology may be established as the state ideology or as a compulsory ideology**..." (my emphasis — N.V.). Thus, at the hearings there was an overt attempt to revise one of the basic provisions of the Fundamental Law guaranteeing the most important of human rights — the right to freedom of thought and speech.

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The "Concept" speaks of an ideology "acceptable to the majority." But what about the minority? Do we send them off to the Gulag? The consideration of "cultural and historical traditions" is mentioned. What traditions? Those that were implanted over most of the 20th century? **Not one** of the speakers pointed out that the greatest threat to Russia's information security stems precisely from...the "Concept of Information Security" in its current form.

When your ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI observer was finally allowed to speak (the last of all) there was an objection from the presidium that it was "particularly moving" to hear a defense of ideological diversity from the representative of a newspaper "which defends just one candidate, its favorite." The reason we defend him is precisely because the country owes its current Constitution to him! We write and say what we think, and if a new "draft on the introduction of uniform thinking in Russia" is adopted, neither we nor you, our naive opponents, will be allowed to think aloud in public.

Regional Affairs

Russia: Date of Yeltsin's Visit to Chechnya Still Undecided

LD1605174996 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1646 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 16 (Interfax) — President Boris Yeltsin's planned visit to Chechnya will only make sense if all sides to the Chechen conflict demonstrate willingness to sit down at the negotiating table, a well-informed expert directly involved in preparing the visit told Interfax.

In his opinion the final decision on the usefulness and date of the visit will be made by Yeltsin himself, who "is least of all interested in personal safety." The very idea of the visit has been increasingly debated in Moscow.

There is an opinion that the time and conditions in Chechnya are not ripe for the visit, because representatives of field commanders are not ready for serious talks on a Chechen settlement, the expert said.

Russia: Grachev: Yeltsin's Security in Chechnya Can Be Ensured

LD1605201096 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1817 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW May 16 (Itar-Tass) — The Russian Defence Ministry does not plan any build-up of the group of federal forces in Chechnya and bringing more units there in connection with President Boris Yeltsin's planned visit to Chechnya. Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev said this to Itar-Tass.

"We have enough forces and means to ensure the President's security in Chechnya," the Minister said.

Meanwhile, two large demolition charges were deactivated in the very centre of Groznyy today, Itar-Tass learnt from the Chechen Interior Ministry. The transmitting centre of the fifth commercial TV channel and four educational establishments, including a secondary school, are situated not far from the cite where the explosive devices were spotted.

On Wednesday, May 15, Russian Interior Minister Anatoliy Kulikov said that at the given moment it is impossible to ensure the necessary conditions for the President's security during his visit to Chechnya. He did not rule out, however, the possibility of a positive change of the situation in the Republic shortly.

Meanwhile, at a news conference in Moscow on Thursday, head of the Chechen Republic Doku Zavgayev said that "the assistance of authoritative people from the country's leadership is needed for the settlement in Chechnya and, therefore, "Russian President Boris Yeltsin's visit will be very useful".

Chairman of the Chechen government Nikolay Koshman expects from Boris Yeltsin's forthcoming visit to Chechnya, first of all, the solution of financial problems. Koshman told a news conference in Groznyy that Chechnya has not yet received in full volume the funds allocated for the restoration of the ravaged economy and for the payment of compensations, benefits and pensions.

Sharply expressing disagreement with those who are against Yeltsin's visit to Chechnya, he stressed that Chechnya is part of Russia and that the President's visit should be viewed as the performance of functions of the Head of State.

Koshman expressed the hope that the visit will help step up the quest for the ways of a peaceful settlement.

Regarding the problem of ensuring the President's security during his planned visit to Chechnya, Koshman said the matter had already been discussed "with federal troops, commandant's offices and Interior Ministry of the Republic".

As to militants' activity "shots will be fired in Chechnya for another ten years," he said. He believes irreconcilable fighters will retreat to highlands and will be making raids even after peace is established in Chechnya.

President of Ingushetia Ruslan Aushev is prepared to participate in the talks on the settlement of the situation in Chechnya and believes they should be held before the Presidential elections in Russia.

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He said this in an interview to Itar-Tass today. Aushev believes the level of such talks, should be very high. "The level of peacemaking efforts of last year's summer won't do", he said.

Aushev said it is high time to solve the Chechen problem, otherwise the armed confrontation will drag out for long. Expressing the doubt that the talks can be held in Groznyy, Aushev proposed that they be held in Ingushetia.

He recalled that Ingushetia already has the experience of such mediation: the meeting between Russian Defence Minister Pavel Grachev and Dzhokhar Dudayev was held there in December 1994, and contacts between representatives of the Federal forces and separatists took place there in February 1995.

The territory of Ingushetia can be used now for contacts with Dudayev's supporters, Aushev said.

Russia: Ichkeria Official Claims Army Planning Attack on Yeltsin

LD1605175196 Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvy in Russian 1500 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The leadership of the [Chechen] Republic of Ichkeria does not rule out possible terrorist acts committed against President Yeltsin during his visit to Chechnya, Movladi Udugov, minister of press and information of the Republic of Ichkeria, told our radio station. He said that at a sitting of the republic's state defense committee on Wednesday [15 May] a special brief was circulated.

[Begin Udugov recording] A brief from the state security department of Chechnya [Ichkeria] was circulated at the sitting, which says that a terrorist act against President Yeltsin is being prepared during his expected visit to Chechnya. According to the state security department [of the Republic of Ichkeria], the terrorist act is being prepared and planned by the leadership of the armed group of [Russia's] occupation troops [deployed] on the territory of the Chechen Republic of Ichkeria under command of General Tikhomirov. Officially, the state security department has no intelligence as yet on the kind of terrorist act to be committed — a physical elimination of Yeltsin or an imitation of a terrorist act aimed at kindling anti-Chechen feelings in Russia. The state security department says intelligence information to this effect will reach it in the next two to three days. The date of the terrorist act which is being planned and prepared within the inner circles of the command of the armed group of the occupation troops in Chechnya will be analysed and evaluated and the results will be made public. [end recording]

Russia: Chechen Prime Minister Optimistic About Yeltsin's Visit

LD1605132896 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1259 GMT 16 May 96

[By Oleg Artyushin]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] GROZNYY, May 16 (Itar-Tass) — Chairman of the Chechen government Nikolay Koshman held a press conference here today. He expressed confidence that elections of the president of the Russian Federation and deputies to the National Assembly of the republic would be successfully held on the territory of Chechnya. Koshman said at the same time, that he does not rule out possible complications with the voting in the part of the republic, where the situation remains unstable. Residents of those areas will be able to vote in other populated localities.

Koshman said that if illegal armed groups penetrated into populated localities, units of the federal troops, withdrawn from there, would be moved back to drive the militants out.

Koshman hopes that the forthcoming visit of President Yeltsin to Chechnya will help resolve their financial problems. He said the republic had not received in full amount the money allocated to it for the restoration of the destroyed economy and for the payment of compensations, allowances and pensions.

According to Koshman, in case of stable financing the republic will provide employment to 80-85 per cent of the able-bodied population, thus bringing down social tension. He believes that the visit of the head of state to Chechnya is the only thing that will permit to resolve numerous problems, both economic and political ones.

Koshman emphatically disagreed with those who oppose Yeltsin's visit to Chechnya and stressed that Chechnya is part of Russia, and Yeltsin's visit there should be regarded as an exercise of his duties of a president. He expressed hope that the visit would permit to step up the quest for ways of a peaceful settlement, because "this is the most difficult problem."

Koshman does not know with whom exactly Yeltsin is going to hold talks in Groznyy. In their turn, members of the Chechen government are holding talks with representatives of the opposing side, and some progress has been made.

Speaking about the problem of ensuring Yeltsin's security during his visit to Chechnya, Koshman stressed that "the problem has already been discussed with the federal troops, commandant's offices and the Chechen Interior Ministry." So far as the activity of militants is concerned, Koshman believes that shooting will go on

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in the republic for another ten years at least. In his opinion, the most irreconcilable militants will go up to the mountains and will stage sallies from there even after the establishment of peace in the republic.

First Vice Premier of Chechnya Sanaki Arbiyev said in a short interview with VAINAKH-PRESS that Yeltsin had a capacity to respond promptly to the situation in the regions. In his opinion, Yeltsin always goes beyond the framework of the electoral campaign, when he renders effective assistance to the regions. Arbiyev is sure that "after seeing in what condition Chechnya is today and what kind of life people have here, the President will take a history-making decision, which will become a turning point in the long conflict and will promote the revival of the economy and the social sphere of Chechnya."

Russia: Settlement Commission Postpones Trip to Chechnya

LD1605195796 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1846 GMT 16 May 96

[By Artyom Protasenko]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 16 (Itar-Tass) — The Russian state commission for settlement in Chechnya has put off its trip to Chechnya from May 18 for the next week, a government spokesman told ITAR-TASS today.

The delay is related to First Deputy Prime Minister Pavel Kadannikov, who is to prepare and chair the commission's meeting in Chechnya.

Kadannikov will accompany President Boris Yeltsin on his election tour of Siberian cities at the end of this week.

Russia: Chernomyrdin Remarks on Chechnya Settlement

MM1605120996 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 16 May 96 p 3

[Report by Anatoliy Mikhaylov: "Chechnya: Shots Continue To Ring Out. Nevertheless, Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin Is Convinced That Progress Will Soon Be Made in Negotiating Process"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] KRASNAYA ZVEZDA has already reported that a session of the State Commission for Settling the Crisis in Chechnya, which is headed by Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, was held 14 May. It was decided to hold the commission's next session in the Chechen Republic itself. The head of government instructed his first deputy, Vladimir Kadannikov, who is also deputy chairman of the State Commission, to agree the date for holding this off-site session with the government of the Chechen Republic.

The prime minister also informed commission members that in the next few days a Russian Federation Government decree on funding for Chechnya would be signed. According to Viktor Chernomyrdin, this decree will reflect questions of funding for the power departments conducting operations on the territory of the Chechen Republic.

A serious problem today, the prime minister said, is the information backup to the settlement process, which is insufficiently objective, in the opinion of the chairman of the State Commission. From certain mass media, Viktor Chernomyrdin stressed, "you might imagine that the whole region is ablaze." However, this is not the case, the head of government noted.

Economic Issues

Russia: Finance Minister Seriously Worried About Budget Execution

MK1605114096 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 15 May 96 p 1

[Report by Elmar Murtazayev: "The Finance Ministry Has Named Those Responsible for the Budget Crisis"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Yesterday, Finance Minister Vladimir Panskov, who earlier was cautious in his judgments, spoke very harshly when describing the budget situation. At a press conference at INTERFAX, the minister called the situation of budget execution "extremely difficult." Budget tax revenues in the first quarter stood at 60 percent, which, in view of the state promises to settle arrears, "is creating a very tense situation for the ministry."

Accounting for the reasons of the budget crisis this year, Mr. Panskov traditionally made an emphasis on parliament activity. In his words, when adopting the 1996 budget, the deputies turned down a number of amendments, as a result of which the budget revenues were diminished by 16 trillion rubles. Nonpayments, on their part, have also struck a heavy blow: A marked rise in nonreceipts this year, which "is gaining up speed catastrophically" (its growth in the first quarter was about 50 percent), entailed the loss of another 20 trillion rubles. Finally, the Finance Ministry was let down by the Russian industry: In 1996, production has continued to decline (by 4 percent in the first three months), which was apparently unexpected for the Government (incidentally, according to the State Statistical Committee, there are signs that the situation has somewhat changed for the better in April). At the

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same time, the minister did not deny the impact of the forthcoming election and gave interesting statistical data: While earlier the main tax nonpayers were only enterprises of the fuel-and-energy complex and the machine-building industry, today the list of nonpaying sectors has expanded considerably. "The enterprises are probably hiding money, either for fear of the results of the presidential election or just awaiting them," he said.

This notwithstanding, the Finance Ministry, so its head assured, will not remain indifferent to the future of the budget. Having bitterly criticized the attempts to resume the practice of reserving 30 percent of funds for wages — which was described by the minister as the "elimination of the tax system" — and the idea to issue corporate stock to offset debts ("What is this? Shares can be issued without any conditions and restrictions!"), Mr. Panskov said that his ministry proposed to oversee the cash sphere more rigorously and to crack down on the practice when an enterprise has various accounts. The essence of the latter proposal boils down to the idea that every enterprise should only have one account for all payments into the budget. For the time being, however, this novelty of the Finance Ministry has not been put into force, since it has been opposed by Sergey Dubinin, chairman of the Central Bank, who believes that it would be more helpful to strengthen the capabilities of overseeing agencies.

The minister is pinning certain hopes on the market of state securities, which "has been and still is saving the budget." The minister, nonetheless, is seriously worried about a high profitability of short-term state bonds; Mr. Panskov, however, believes that "we have almost extinguished this process."

Speaking about the currency exchange rate policy, he said that the final decision on the subsequent mechanism of currency exchange rate control had not been made, but, in his personal opinion, an inclined currency band was the most probable solution. The minister also briefed the journalists on the work on the concept of the 1997 budget, currently under way at federal agencies. This work "is proceeding with difficulty" (as is the execution of the 1996 budget). The Finance Ministry, however, has taken into consideration the experience with the 1996 budget and now, according to Mr. Panskov, all deputies' amendments to the budget will be taken into account in advance.

Russia: Yeltsin Signs Edict Compensating Pensioners' Lost Savings

LD1605164796 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1453 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 16 (Interfax) — Compensation for savings at the Russian Sberbank lost through high inflation will begin on June 10 in keeping with a decree signed by President Boris Yeltsin Thursday. The early compensation applies to persons born in 1916 and earlier who kept their savings at Sberbank.

Compensation of up to 1,000 1991 rubles will be paid per account for balances as of June 20, 1991.

Compensation will be 1,000-fold on accounts opened before June 20, 1991, and still operating and accounts opened in 1992-1995 and closed this year; 900-fold on accounts opened in 1992-1994 and closed in 1995; 800-fold on accounts opened in 1992-1993 and closed in 1994; 700-fold on accounts opened in 1992 and closed in 1992; and 600-fold on accounts closed in 1992.

The Russian government and Sberbank are to work out regulations to enforce the decree.

The presidential press service report says the decree is aimed at improving social support for senior citizens before the implementation of the federal law on the protection of personal savings in the Russian Federation.

Russia: Duma Laments Government's Failure To Meet Budget Targets

MK1705101496 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 May 96 p 2

[Report by Rustam Narzikulov: "Kadannikov Reports on the Budget"]

[FBIS Translated Text] There is no doubt that the government has been driven into a financial corner. It is equally obvious that in this connection there is no need to take some super-efforts to deliver telling political strikes against the government.

The State Duma's activity in exposing the financial failures of the executive branch is doomed to success right from the start. It is clear why the budget crisis has now turned into the main instrument of the struggle against the present government and the incumbent president.

Meanwhile conclusions arising from the present economic situation can be only depressing for the executive branch. Therefore the dispute between the Finance Ministry and the Duma Budget Committee as to how much revenue has actually come in to the budget is

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rather pointless. Nobody will be able to either confirm or deny the statements by Vladimir Panskov or Vladimir Kadannikov yesterday and the day before yesterday that the non-execution of the budget revenue plan in the first quarter of 1996 (49 trillion rubles instead of 70 trillion) was compensated for by a sequestering of expenditures by 20 percent (the state spent 70 trillion rubles instead of 87 trillion). Likewise it is impossible to verify Mikhail Zadornov's statement that federal budget expenditures stand at 63 trillion rubles as against 35 trillion revenues, while the deficit is 28 trillion. According to Panskov and Kadannikov the government on the whole keeps the budget situation under control, in spite of some difficulties. According to Zadornov the government has suffered a fiasco and therefore has broken its obligations to the IMF, raising the level of the budget deficit in the first quarter to 5.6 percent of GDP.

In fact the government will hardly manage to stay within the budget plan, because all the economic factors "act" against budget stability.

First, the state bond market, which was expected to cover 60 percent of the budget deficit (the net yield from the placement of treasury bond securities and federal loan bonds [GKO's and OFZ's] in 1996 was supposed to approximate 60 trillion rubles), is not justifying the hopes. The Central Bank's desperate attempts to rectify the situation with the GKO pyramid are now confined to settling accounts with private creditors. Today nobody will even dream about trillions of rubles in revenue from the placement of state securities.

Second, the preelection factor compels the government not only to bear the burden of the parliament's financial populism but also to actively engage itself in the race of monetary promises and cash gifts. None of this, naturally, is conducive to reducing the deficit.

And finally, the third factor impairing the federal budget is the rapidly growing barterization of the economy, leading to a rising shortfall in revenue. The business sector has already appreciated the advantages of noncash settlements (barter with a subsequent clearance of mutual debt) which allows it not to pay taxes, and it is using the troubled preelection waters for successfully shortchanging the state.

The government and the president will certainly keep the budget going until election day. After 16 June the ruling authority will hardly be concerned about budget problems, and so the victims will be the clients of the treasury, who will again see delays in the payment of wages, pensions, and state orders. The current financial crisis is once again confirming the old rule: The state of the treasury cannot be better than the state of the economy. The bustle around budget revenues will not save the state financial system if recession in the economic sector continues.

Russia: Planned Sliding Exchange Rate for Ruble Viewed

MM1705112096 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 17 May 96 p 1

[Report by Yelena Ishkova and Marina Kryuchkova: "By Strengthening the Ruble President Is Strengthening His Own Positions"]

[FBIS Translated Text] By an edict of Boris Yeltsin's as of 1 July Russia will introduce a so-called "sliding" or "sloping" exchange rate for the ruble which will be linked to the course of inflation. This decision was made 16 May at a conference with the president in which Aleksandr Livshits, his aide for economic questions, First Vice Premier Vladimir Kadannikov, and Central Bank Chairman Sergey Dubinin took part.

At the same time Moscow has acceded to paragraph eight of the IMF Charter on the convertibility of the ruble for current currency operations. What does that mean?

So far we have had certain restrictions on the implementation of currency operations for nonresidents — foreign entrepreneurs and bankers. Now another and very important step has been made toward the liberalization of banking legislation, which will undoubtedly attract foreign investors.

"Russia's accession to this paragraph will give rise to more respect for our country in the international market," says Mikhail Delyagin, an adviser in the president's program analysis administration. "We shall be able to count on large volumes of credits from international currency organizations at a lower interest rate. This is evidence that the financial situation in the country is not only satisfactory but is also improving markedly. After all, so far the uncertainty with regard to the Central Bank's currency reserves has prevented us from acceding to this article. Recently we have been succeeding in keeping that reserve at an unprecedentedly high level — $10 billion. This is largely the result of the dedollarization of the economy last year, in 1995. In turn that became possible thanks to the tough financial policy and the reduction of inflation."

Until 1 July the old currency band will continue to operate in the country, restricting the fall in the ruble to R5,150 for one U.S. dollar. But already the Central Bank will start daily to declare the exchange rate of the national currency which will be calculated on the basis of operations on the interbank and exchange currency markets. The point is that the exchange rate of the

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Moscow Interbank Currency Exchange which is now the determining one has not been indicative for a long time. The volume of deals there is steadily declining. A more precise guideline is needed. The daily quotations of the Central Bank will be this guideline. According to Central Bank Chairman Sergey Dubinin the difference between the upper and lower limits of the exchange rate will be no more than 1.5 percent. It is of fundamental importance that the ruble exchange rate is now directly linked to forecasts of the rate of inflation and will lag slightly behind it. It was the lack of this link to inflation which Russian exporters were complaining about, seeing in it the main shortcoming of the currency band.

As of 1 July the limits for the fluctuation of the exchange rate will be R5,000-5,600 and as of 31 December R5,500-6,100 per dollar.

"Yeltsin's edict on measures to safeguard the transition to the ruble's convertibility will undoubtedly attract business circles' votes to him. But I am sure that this is not only an election step but also a manifestation of the present government's consistent line," Vladimir Kudryavtsev, deputy director of an "Inkombank" department, noted. "I believe that with Sergey Dubinin's arrival in the Central Bank the Central Bank has begun to work with banks in a more civilized fashion and the state's financial policy has become more considered."

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International Affairs

Ukraine: Kiev Conference Demands Withdrawal From CIS, Joining NATO

AU1505151196 Lvov ZA VILNU UKRAYINU in Ukrainian 11 May 96 p 1

[Report by Maryan Zhytaryuk "specially for ZA VILNU UKRAYINU" from Kiev-Lvov: "To Withdraw From the CIS! To Join NATO — This Is the Position of Young Ukrainian People!"]

[FBIS Translated Text] On 29 April through 1 May, Ukraine's Ministry for Issues of Young People and Sports and the "Molodyy Rukh" — youth organization of Ukraine's People's Rukh [Movement for Perestroyka] — held a scientific and practical conference of young politicians under a quite ambiguous motto: "Ukraine on the path toward Europe." It was quite natural that some participants spoke in favor of revising the motto, because Ukraine is not somewhere outside Europe. Ukraine is at the center of Europe. However, Pavlo Rozenko, a leading aide of deputy chairman of Ukraine's Supreme Council Commission for Foreign Affairs and Ties with the CIS and post-graduate at the International Relations Institute, tried to convince the young politicians present there, as well as scientists from 18 Ukrainian oblasts that, politically, Ukraine is not yet a European state. To my mind, he failed in this, but the conference did not change its motto either.

Apart from young people, experienced politicians also addressed the audience: Vyacheslav Chornovil, chairman of Ukraine's People's Rukh (he spoke about the need to expand international contacts and about his trips abroad in May: Prague, Istanbul, Warsaw, and Saloniki; he said that "the People's Rukh does not raise the question of Ukraine's membership of military alliances, as the danger for Europe lies in its division...."); Borys Hudyma, deputy foreign minister; and Professor A. Filipenko, doctor of economic sciences and head of the chair of international economic relations at the International Relations Institute ("Ukraine — Europe: Economic Interaction").

Ukraine's policy with regard to NATO, whether it is worth being integrated within the European commonwealth (and precisely how) and what about the CIS — these were the main topics that were at the focus of discussions. It was reassuring that representatives of Lvov branches of the Ukrainian Students Union [USS] and of the "Young Rukh" — students of journalism, international relations, and historical departments were among the most active participants in the conference. The conference adopted proposals for Ukraine's Ministry of Foreign Affairs in which it is explicitly stated that Ukraine must immediately withdraw from the CIS and head for European integration and that it must carefully look into the possibility of joining NATO. The question of Ukraine's nonnuclear status was characterized as erroneous and politically (USS Chairman Yuriy Zubko) and economically (Professor A. Filipenko) unbalanced. Even though there were other opinions.

The scientific conference ended totally extraordinarily — by the participation in the undertakings of Ukraine's democratic forces under the motto "A new constitution for independent Ukraine" that took place near the Taras Shevchenko monument and at the Sophia Square in Kiev.

Ukraine: Official Says Kiev Has Honored CFE Agreement

LD1605194496 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1754 GMT 16 May 96

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, May 16 (Interfax-Ukraine) — New approaches adequate to the changed situation in Europe are necessary to make the CFE treaty effective and viable, Ukrainian Deputy Foreign Minister Konstantin Grishchenko has said.

Grishchenko told the first full-scale session of the conference on the CFE treaty in Vienna that after the first 46 months the treaty had been in effect the main goals mentioned in its preamble were achieved. The military and offensive potentials of the member-countries had considerably reduced.

Grishchenko said that Ukraine had honored its obligations in full and on time in spite of the complicated domestic economic situation and the lack of tangible material assistance from other member-countries.

Under the CFE treaty Ukraine by the end of last year had reduced its conventional arms to the established quotas: 4,080 tanks, 5,050 armored personnel carriers, 4,040 of less than 10-mm caliber artillery pieces, 1,090 combat planes and 330 helicopter gunships.

The diplomat said that the unsettled Black Sea Fleet problem had not allowed Ukraine to honor its commitments involving the Coast Guards and the Marines. Grishchenko confirmed that Ukraine wanted the removal from its territory of that part of the Black Sea Fleet's equipment which would go over to Russia.

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Ukraine: Kiev Signs Border Agreements at CIS Meeting in Yerevan

LD1605165796 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1330 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kiev [No dateline as received] — At the meeting of the Council of Border Troops Commanders of the CIS Member States, held on 14-15 May in Yerevan, Ukraine signed a number of documents.

As a UNIAN correspondent has learned from Viktor Bannykh, head of the Ukrainian State Committee for Defense of Ukrainian State Borders, Ukraine has signed the plan covering the participation of the border troops of the CIS member states in the implementation of the interstate program of fighting transborder organized crime until the year 2000.

Bannykh said that the above plan envisages the coordination of actions and the exchange of information between the border troops of the CIS in the sphere of fighting organized crime.

Bannykh said that Ukraine had also signed "the plan for assisting in the establishment of the Tajik border troops," i.e. assistance in training specialists and providing technical means for the guarding of the state borders.

Ukraine has also joined the document on the unified list of research and development projects aimed at finding technical means necessary for providing the defense of state borders and the decision on the participation in scientific conferences on the above subjects.

Bannykh said that Ukraine had not signed the declaration on the regime of "external" borders of the CIS member states — the document that implements the agreement and concept of the defense of the "external" borders of the CIS member states.

Ukraine: Fleet Seen as Obstacle to Treaty With Russia

WS1605141796 Kiev VSEUKRAINSKIYE VEDOMOSTI in Russian 8 May 96 p 3

[Article by Svitlana Korynevych: "Sea Battles in the Election Race"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A visit by the Russian president to Kiev, expected in early April, has not yet taken place. The official reason, actively publicized by the Russian mass media and echoed by some media in Ukraine, are the unsolved problems of the Black Sea Fleet. Boris Yeltsin himself explained yet another postponement of his visit as follows: "If accords on the Black Sea Fleet are not 'incorporated' into the large-scale treaty with Ukraine, there will be no need to hurry to Ukraine. Let us put off the visit for some time and finally resolve this issue to satisfy both sides." However, a question arises here: Has the Fleet issue really become the stumbling block, or is it employed by some Russian political forces to expand their electoral base?

Playing the "Fleet Card"

Although the division of the Black Sea Fleet is an issue that should be handled only by the Russian and Ukrainian defense ministries, it has evolved into a multilevel political problem. Despite all declarations by Ukrainian and Russian top officials on the need to develop good-neighborly political, economic, and other relations between our states, a comprehensive treaty with the Russian Federation remains unconcluded thus far. Meanwhile, this document is absolutely necessary not only for the two countries, but also for strengthening European security. The treaty should reaffirm the principle of inviolability of the present borders, the refusal to interfere in internal affairs and, most important, it must become a basis for further development of cooperation between the two sovereign European states.

However, the present uncertainty in relations with Ukraine suits most of the Russian political forces — from nationalistic patriots to communists. They apparently include the Russian president's closest entourage. For example, Moscow Mayor Yuriy Luzhkov, who is in Yeltsin's reelection camp, has repeatedly made political statements suggesting that Sevastopol is part of Russia. This situation allows Russian nationalistic patriots to play up the of the "protection" of Russians in Ukraine, scoring points on the eve of the presidential elections. It is easy to assume that if signed, the treaty would immediately be used by Yeltsin's opponents to accuse him of ignoring Russian national interests. This, in turn, would reduce the present Russian president's electorate.

The treaty with Ukraine would enhance the authority of Boris Yeltsin only if, first, it were in full compliance with the Russian view on the resolution of the Black Sea Fleet issue or, second, if it fitted in the concept of integration of post-Soviet states modeled on Russian-Belarusian relations. However, the point is that Ukraine will never accept such conditions.

The State Duma itself, now called "red," is no stranger to playing the "Fleet card." Aware that most of Russian military servicemen oppose the Fleet's division and handing over a part of it to Ukraine, the legislators, in fact, rejected the concept of creating two fleets out of the Black Sea Fleet. By 317 "yes" votes, with only four "against," it decided to stop the Fleet's reduction. Under this circumstance, should Yeltsin agree to sign

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a friendship treaty with Ukraine, a considerable part of his military electorate will abandon him.

The Black Sea Fleet Wants To Grow Red

The second level of the Fleet problem are Kiev's relations with the Autonomous Crimean Republic. It should be noted that they were worsened by radical deputies in the Crimean parliament. Pro-Russian forces in Crimea, while not rejecting the peninsula's Ukrainian territory status in words, in reality are pressing for a Crimean constitution that would allow the republic to seek independence, that is, become part of Russia. Those forces stand behind the appeals to the Russian president and various international organizations condemning alleged human rights violations by Ukraine. This is why it is easy to predict that if Boris Yeltsin signs a Russian-Ukrainian treaty that, in the opinion of pro-Russian politicians, does not reflect the interests of ethnic Russians in Crimea and the "guarantor of their security, the Black Sea Fleet," this would be viewed as proof of the "treacherous" policy of the Russian president.

There is another alarming tendency: The Black Sea Fleet is increasingly becoming an "armed detachment" of the Russian nationalist-patriotic and left-wing forces. Thus, not only does it pose a threat to political stability in Ukraine, but it also opposes Yeltsin's political line. Let us recall that when the Duma renounced the Belovezhskaya Accords, some of the Fleet's ships welcomed that decision by hoisting red flags. And it was Russian Navy Commander Feliks Gromov who came out as one of the initiators of the decision to suspend the Fleet's reduction. Given the above factors, the need for a clearly defined status of the Black Sea Fleet in Ukraine becomes extremely acute.

Sevastopol Is a Matter of Principle

The third level of the Fleet problem are relations between Ukraine and Sevastopol. They carry two main issues: the division of ships and infrastructure, and identification of base locations, with the former now being a formal obstacle for signing a sweeping treaty. The question is whether the Ukrainian Navy will be based in Sevastopol, or will only Russian Navy ships be stationed there? Apart from its defense significance, this issue is gaining a political spin for Ukraine. If the Ukrainian Navy left Sevastopol, one could be positive that it would virtually become a Russian city — a long-time dream of Russian nationalists and the pro-Russian forces in Crimea.

In addition, the Ukrainian military presence in Sevastopol, even if purely symbolic and without signs of hostile intentions toward Russia, is a matter of principle. It is about Ukraine's right to independently determine locations for its own naval bases. Second, if the Ukrainian leadership refuses to base the national Navy in Sevastopol, this would provoke sharp criticism on the part of domestic nationalist-democratic forces, putting additional strains on the situation in the country.

There are also many disputes about the time frame for which the Sevastopol base could be rented. Russia insists on a longer term, while Ukraine is not interested in this. Russia's arguments that a short-term rent would prevent it from allocating necessary financing to properly maintain the base sound, to put it mildly, unconvincing. So, to prevent the Black Sea Fleet from turning into a factor of political instability in Ukraine as a result of the election campaign in Russia, Ukraine should quickly adopt a law determining a status for the Fleet, as well as terms and conditions for renting its bases.

Is Russia Not Interested in Incorporating Crimea?

As a matter of fact, all those Fleet disputes are only the tip of the iceberg. The reason for another postponement of the Russian president's visit to Kiev has several deeper aspects, connected with Russia's geopolitical strategy. The concluded accords on creating the "union of four" and a Russian-Belarusian Community allowed Boris Yeltsin to postpone a signing of the treaty with Ukraine without hurting his image of the "collector of Russian lands." The fate of the Fleet has become only a convenient pretext for capitalizing on the nationalist feelings of the majority of Russian voters. Thus, the real cause [in postponing the visit] is different points of view on the future of Ukrainian-Russian relations and the system of collective security in Europe.

There would not be any problems with the Fleet and, hence, with the much-awaited treaty if Ukraine had signed the Tashkent [CIS security] pact and concluded a military cooperation treaty with Russia. Also, there would be no problems if an efficient collective security system, joined by Ukraine and Russia, operated in Europe. The two options, however, are very unlikely in the near future.

Today, most of the Russian political forces, both from the point of view of Russia's geopolitical interests and for purely psychological reasons, do not accept an independent political course for Ukraine. Russian politicians are particularly concerned about the possibility for the "wayward neighbor" to drift toward the West and NATO. Paradoxically, Moscow is not interested in finally resolving "Crimean issues," including those connected with the Black Sea Fleet and the status of Sevastopol, because — along with energy problems — they serve as an efficient tool for exerting pressure on Ukraine. Moreover, Russia, for the same reason, is not

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interested now in incorporating Crimea, even though this would considerably improve its strategic position. The Kremlin is more comfortable to create on the peninsula some kind of military and political enclave which, while being a part of Ukraine, would represent an absolutely independent formation with its own laws and rulers.

Thus, the number one problem for Ukraine's foreign policy is determining priorities. From the tactical point of view, pursuing neutral policies is the most suitable thing for us. Later, we may have to change our line. The future Russian-Ukrainian relations, just as the foreign strategy of our country, depend primarily on the architecture of collective security.

National Affairs

Ukraine: Crimean Speaker, Ukrainian Military Hold Talks

LD1605152596 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1000 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Simferopol — Head of the Crimean Supreme Council Yevhen Suprunyuk today met with Lieutenant-General Oleksandr Kuzmuk, commander of the Ukrainian National Guard, and Major-General Stanislav Ivakhnenko, head of the chief directorate of the Ukrainian Security Service in Crimea.

A UNIAN correspondent reports that during their meeting the sides exchanged opinions on a wide range of issues concerning the situation in Crimea. Oleksandr Kuzmuk said that he came to Crimea to coordinate the actions of the National Guard units deployed in Crimea, and to meet with the Crimean Supreme Council, government, and law enforcement agencies.

Kuzmuk stressed that his trip to Crimea was planned and is connected with implementation of the decision of the Ukrainian National Security Council Presidium at the president's administration [as received] aimed at incorporating certain units and formations of the Ukrainian Defense Ministry, which are scheduled for reduction, into the Ukrainian National Guard. He said that in Crimea the National Guard will absorb a marine infantry brigade, currently deployed in Feodosiya, and an independent mechanized battalion, deployed in Perevalnyy.

Kuzmuk noted that the measures aimed at streamlining the structure are being carried out in strict compliance with the law of Ukraine "On the Ukrainian National Guard" and assured the Crimean Supreme Council head that the guard's units deployed in Crimea will act in accordance with their tasks, the main one of which is to defend the honor, dignity, life, and health of citizens. The guard's units, deployed in Crimea, will be used if necessary for dealing with the consequences of natural disasters and emergencies.

Suprunyuk expressed his confidence that the activity of the Ukrainian National Guard on Crimean territory will be useful and beneficial for all Crimean residents.

Ukraine: New Crimean Constitution Takes Effect

LD1505194296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1828 GMT 15 May 96

[By Lev Ryabchikov]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] SIMFEROPOL, May 15 (ITAR-TASS) — Ukraine's law enacting a new constitution of Crimea became effective on Wednesday, Crimean parliament chairman Yevgeniy Suprunyuk said.

Suprunyuk described the enactment of the law as a "big event for Crimea," a success of Crimean politicians who "have demonstrated in practice that disputable issues can be resolved through negotiations."

He thanked deputies for the "patience and restraint" they showed in their efforts to get the constitution adopted and expressed gratitude to the leadership of the Ukrainian parliament and the Ukrainian president for their understanding of the Crimean issue.

Ukraine: Parliament Accused of Trying To Stifle Electronic Media

LD1605192796 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1640 GMT 16 May 96

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Presidential Chief of Staff Dmitriy Tabachnik has no doubts that most Ukrainians will vote in favor of the new constitution if a nationwide referendum is held, Tabachnik told a news briefing in Kiev referring to latest polls.

He accused part of the mass media for trying to link the popularity ratings of political groups with possible referendum results.

Tabachnik said the mixed parliamentary group working on the new basic law was working hard and in a constructive way including representatives of part of the left-wing groups except the Communists who walked out of the group causing the Socialists to do the same for "some time."

He said representatives of the Peasants' Party want several amendments on local self-rule and the country's emblems.

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However, the parliament rejected attempts by the Communist faction to try to halt the constitutional process as being sheer politicking.

The chief of staff said the conciliatory commission was pressed for time warning against further delay to avert general frustration on the ground.

He said the commission expects to be able to finish its work in the next few days followed by a meeting of the parliamentary faction leaders who must approve the final wording of the draft.

On a parliamentary resolution relating to the electronic mass media, Tabachnik called it the legislature's first attempt to try to stage political reprisals over the country's electronic media.

IF note: The Supreme Soviet on Monday approved a resolution to withdraw trust in heads of the state radio and television committee and national television company Zinoviy Kulik and Oleksandr Savenko.

The parliament offered the president to abolish the state radio and television committee as an extra tier over the national electronic media.

The national security service and prosecutor general's office are given until September 1 to set up an investigation on the activity of local and foreign TV and radio companies in the country's information space by leaning upon the findings by an ad hoc parliamentary commission.

Tabachnik warned about dire implications from trying to implement the resolution. He described it as a wild case and an attempt to stifle the freedom of speech.

He said the resolution was illiterate both theoretically and politically.

The chief of staff said the Ukrainian president would not endorse the resolution because "none of its points is based on the rule of law." He said the parliament was not entitled to express a no confidence either in Kulik or Savenko because neither of them are government members.

Worse, he said, the resolution marks the start of a reversal to the past when labels such as the people's enemy were at work.

The chief of staff accused Parliament Speaker Oleksandr Moroz of manipulating the vote during decision-making in parliament. He said many parliamentary documents often have to be amended because of being raw.

Ukraine: Dispute Over TV Management Viewed

WS1705103496 Kiev KIYEVSKIYE VEDOMOSTI in Russian 14 May 96 pp 1,3

[Article by Olha Beztalanna and Oles Buzyna: "Zinoviy Kulyk and Oleksandr Savenko Have Been Accused of Making an Attempt at Ukraine's Informational Sovereignty"]

[FBIS Translated Text] **The Ukrainian parliament yesterday focused on "getting things straight" in the domestic television and radio space. A draft Supreme Council resolution based on the multipage work of a temporary investigation commission suggested abolishing the State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting [Derzhteleradio] (as a useless structure) by the president, as well as expressing no confidence in Derzhteleradio Chairman Zinoviy Kulyk and National Television Company President Oleksandr Savenko. The document contained yet another interesting appeal — to set up special subunits of the Ukrainian Security Service and the Office of Prosecutor General to defend "the state's informational sovereignty."**

The investigative commission's report itself is quite a voluminous work. Moreover, accusations are based on three versions. They are presented below without references to the only source — the conclusions of the Supreme Council commission.

Version I: Derzhteleradio Chairman Mr. Kulyk "Has Brought Television to Absurdity"

Despite frequent reorganizations, all the reins of government in Derzhteleradio have always been held by two or three officials. In January 1995, power was concentrated in the hands of Zinoviy Kulyk. He and his deputies "have been exerting moral pressure on the country's leadership," explaining their illegal actions with the fact that the budget financing of the branch is meager. By manipulating money earmarked for state orders (the commission refers to the data of the Ministry of Finance Control and Audit Directorate), Mr. Kulyk has conducted a number of doubtful operations. He is being accused of purchasing equipment through brokers, ignoring domestic producers' offers, and deliberately turning down money coming from commercials. At his initiative, Innova-Film (Germany), Perekhid-Media (Great Britain), and Mass Media Center (the United States) received prime time on the UT-1 and UT-2 channels for free. Mr. Kulyk prohibited local state television companies from broadcasting on UT-1 and UT-2 during evening hours, which was handed over to commercial companies for their programs. It was the "1+1" foreign

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company, and not the only domestic producer Ukrtelefilm, that received airtime. Mr. Kulyk carried out an action aimed at dispersing the third nationwide channel, so that it did not prevent foreign companies from "parasitizing on UT-1 and UT-2." So, this is how the commission "drastically" chided the Derzhteleradio chairman.

Version II: Mr. Savenko, National Television Company President, "Has Virtually Destroyed the State Broadcasting System"

Having had two channels — UT-1 and UT-2 — at its disposal, the National Television Company "has very operatively handed over half of airtime to nonstate companies, primarily foreign ones. Two foreign agencies and one joint venture obtained nearly all of the advertising time. They represent the interests of private firms from Great Britain (Perekhid-Midia), France (IR-Kiev), and Russia (Prioritet). Mr. Savenko has never verified his partners or used his quota. Moreover, his partners are operating on very favorable terms. Nobody has transferred any money to the National Television Company's account, even though the partners are still on the air. All major contracts were concluded in violation of Ukrainian law. Foreigners are adding a political hue to informational and analytical programs: Television viewers receive a version of our life from Americans (MMC), and a version of world events is provided by CNN, as well as SIT, ORT, NBC, and ITN, as opposed to our "flimsy UTN." The leadership of the National Television Company has displayed disrespect for presidential edicts by violating the ban on advertising alcohol and tobacco.

As we can see, in the opinion of the "investigators," the leadership of the National Television Company has become dependent on the foreign bourgeoisie. However, higher state bodies were chided as well.

Version III: The State Has No Concept of Development and Legislative Regulation

The commission described the state of Ukraine's broadcasting as "unmanageable by the highest authorities." As a result, the commission members believe, dozens of lawsuits have been lodged with courts, and the number of prosecutors' inquiries, statements, and complaints addressed to the Supreme Council and the president is increasing. The parliament passed the Law of Ukraine "On Amendments and Changes to the Law 'On Television and Radio Broadcasting.'" The president himself, however, vetoed this document, which "objectively facilitated the development of destructive processes."

As a result of reorganizations, in the opinion of the Supreme Council commission, "Ukraine's information security was threatened" when the president issued an edict subordinating the RRT concern to one of its consumers — Derzhteleradio. Having ended up on the verge of bankruptcy because of systematic nonpayments for services, the concern is on the eve of a strike.

The National Television and Radio Council, enjoying the highest powers, not only did not perform its duties, but also systematically violated the law. Moreover, it is subordinated only to the Supreme Council and the Ukrainian president.

What Is the Supreme Council Temporary Investigative Commission Proposing?

It is proposing to ensure the supremacy of everything national as opposed to foreign, including financial, material, intellectual, and creative components. It is necessary to counter any monopolization, even if it is initiated by a state institution. Additionally, the commission members are proposing to set up a supervisory board for national television companies. National television and radio companies should preserve their technical bases, but it will be appropriate Supreme Council and Presidential Administration structures that will become their founders (on a 50-50 basis). They will also have their supervisory board. It is proposed to transfer UT-1 to the National Television Company, and UT-2 to public television. A joint venture with Russia may use the third channel within the framework of interstate broadcasting (though Russia is also sort of a foreign state...).

The commission believes that redistribution of Ukraine's television and radio airtime was conducted last year with the support of the highest state structures. Many phenomena are irreversible. In the opinion of the investigators, the state continues to lose sovereignty in information space in a hidden form.

The battle for another redistribution of this space is entering a new stage at all levels, and this is evident. By the way, this can be confirmed by yesterday's settling of accounts with television and radio broadcasting in parliament.

Justification I

Oleksandr Savenko refused to comment for KIYEVSKIYE VEDOMOSTI on the conclusions made by the temporary commission because he had just returned from a hospital where he had taken his child, who was in a critical condition. He only said that many things in the materials are true. Many things are exaggerated, however, and do not correspond to reality. "Let Mr. Kulyk comment on this document," he added.

[KIYEVSKIYE VEDOMOSTI] But Mr. Kulyk is the chairman of Derzhteleradio, and you are the president of the National Television Company. Friendship is

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friendship, but debts are another thing, as the saying goes....

[Savenko] We are named together in nearly the entire report of the commission....

[KIYEVSKIYE VEDOMOSTI] In your opinion, is the investigative commission itself competent enough?

[Savenko] You know who the members are. What can I say? You know what kind of specialists are on this commission.... Every word must be well-considered.

Justification II

In line with Mr. Savenko's proposal, we have asked Zinoviy Kulyk a few questions.

[KIYEVSKIYE VEDOMOSTI] You are being accused of handing over more than half of our first television channel to the German firm Innova-Film, which uses the "1+1" name. Deputy Aksenenko deems this contract enslaving, and believes that during election campaigns it will be this company that will decide which candidate should be shown....

[Kulyk] This is sheer demagoguery. Innova-Film is only a co- owner of the "1+1" studio. All employees of this studio are Ukrainian citizens. This means jobs for our journalists. I will not repeat that Innova-Film cooperates with CDF, France Internationale, and BBC. Suffice it to say that it was in this studio that Rodnyanskyy made his movies, which later received a Nika and a Silver Bear [movie awards].

Second, programs produced by "1+1" are not at all political. These are only films. Not a single foreign company has anything to do with commentaries on political actions conducted by our state.

[KIYEVSKIYE VEDOMOSTI] Aksenenko believes that "1+1" is all-powerful, because when the parliament decided to present its work on the first channel last September, Derzhteleradio was no longer able to carry out this decision without causing damage to the Germans.

[Kulyk] The talk was about causing damage not to the Germans, but to the interests of our television viewers. The Supreme Council decided to broadcast the so-called "Factions' Rostrum", during which every faction received 10 minutes starting at 21:40. Imagine that every day during a plenary session all factions take the floor, and if I am correct, there are 13 of them. We like to refer to foreign experience. For example, British television twice a week broadcasts 15 minutes of deputies' questions to the premier and his answers. There are no live relays of parliamentary meetings at all. At a meeting of faction chairmen, I told them the following: "Esteemed deputies, you are cutting the branch on which you are sitting. In the evening, people mostly look for relaxation on television channels. If you give them two hours of politics, they will look for recreation on other channels."

[KIYEVSKIYE VEDOMOSTI] You were reminded of the well-known switching of channels and accused of the fact that it was economically inadvisable [as published], because ORT "every month punctually transferred 1 billion rubles [R] to Ukraine to pay for broadcasting before Zinoviy Kulyk's instruction. The payments stopped after the switching."

[Kulyk] This is complete disinformation! Late last March, the then Ostankino company sent us a document in which it estimated its debt at R15 billion and officially informed that it was unable to repay it.

[KIYEVSKIYE VEDOMOSTI] Did it paid punctually before that?

[Kulyk] How could it pay punctually...? The debt amounted to R15 billion! The ORT company which was later established refused to pay the debts of its predecessor, and stated that it was only interested in six hours of evening airtime, and it was our matter whether we would broadcast the rest of its programs or not. Additionally, they decided to pay for broadcasting according to Russian estimates. Our estimates were approximately twice as high because electricity is more expensive in our country. As Derzhteleradio chairman, I could not accept this proposal!

[KIYEVSKIYE VEDOMOSTI] According to your opponents, the process of destroying Ukraine's information space is gaining momentum, and you are not doing anything. For example, local television companies from Kharkov and Ivano-Frankivsk "rammed" their advertisements into UT-1 and UT-2 programs.

[Kulyk] Why are they providing only two such facts? Derzhteleradio knows of over 20 of them. This case is subject to legal proceedings between the owners of this airtime and the violators. The committee reacted to this and fined the managers who had made this possible.

[KIYEVSKIYE VEDOMOSTI] You are being accused that advertisements of alcohol and tobacco products have been aired on Ukrainian television, even though this is prohibited by law. "Mr. Kulyk did not react to the commission's statement, and tried to reduce all violations to the activities of the small television company Mehapol which received $2,500, while the contract for alcohol ads totalled $190,000. During a meeting of the investigative commission, Mr. Kulyk put all the blame on his subordinate Savenko."

[Kulyk] This is another piece of nonsense. We had a catastrophic situation with the budget. It was once

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more curtailed, but they did not give us even this curtailed money. The RRT concern was not paid for three months, and television companies for two months. We were looking for a way out. One of the possible options was to advertise tobacco and alcohol products. As for the investigative commission, I did not put the blame on Savenko, but told the truth. I told Savenko the following: "We should inform somebody." He replied: "Moroz visited us. I discussed this with him. He cannot give a written 'go-ahead,' but said the following: 'Since there is no way out, what can one do....'" This means that he said neither yes nor no. So, I did not shift the blame on to Savenko.

Postscript When the current issue was being written up, after a heated debate, the parliament adopted the draft resolution proposed by the investigative commission. The lawmakers are to dot all the "i's" today.

Economic Issues

Ukraine: Moroz: President, Government Not Restoring Economy

LD1605192996 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1745 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KIEV, May 16 (Interfax-Ukraine) — Oleksandr Moroz, chairman of the Ukrainian parliament, believes that the president and government have not carried out the reforms that had been approved by parliament. Speaking in the State Management Academy in Kiev Thursday he said that the activities of the executive branch have resulted in significant disproportions in the national economy which add to the economic crisis.

The difference between the wholesale and retail prices has increased over the last five years while economic sectors developed at different rates, he said.

Consumer prices increased 118,000 times, while incomes grew only 27,700 times, Moroz said.

"Stabilization is impossible unless the socioeconomic course of reforms, declared by the president and approved by the Supreme Soviet, is faithfully adhered to," he said.

Ukraine: New Privatization Law Passed by Parliament

WS1605083896 Kiev INTELNEWS in English 0315 GMT 16 May 96

[By Oksana Hasyuk, INTELNEWS Staff Writer]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kiev, May 15 — A new privatization law passed by Parliament on Wednesday sets new guidelines for the sale of small business and reaffirms control over the process by local government councils.

Enterprises of processing, light, food and construction industries, individual kinds of transport, servicing sector, trade and home maintenance and repair businesses are now subject to priority privatization.

The law also states that integral property complexes of small state-run enterprises, classified by the State Privatization Program as small-scale, can be privatized, as can individually subdivided property of larger enterprises and incomplete construction sites.

The law bans privatization of buildings or premises which are of national, cultural and historical value and which are protected by the state.

In addition, the law stipulates that specialized trade enterprises servicing providing exclusive services to citizens who enjoy privileges in conformity with current legislation are off-limits to privatization.

In what critics said was a blow to efforts to get privatization moving more quickly, Parliament voted down an Economic Committee-proposed change to the law which would have regarded the State Property Fund and its regional branches as the selling parties in privatization transactions.

Instead, Parliament left unchanged present stipulations which required the SPF and privatization bodies to secure the approval of local Radas before privatizing small-scale enterprises .

According to Communist Serhiy Drahomeretskyy, who heads Parliament's control commission on issues of privatization, "one cannot dismiss local Radas from privatization, namely because they are real owners of state property."

In conformity with the law, sellers of small-scale businesses belonging to Crimea are created by Crimean Parliament property management bodies.

Parliament deputies, following the control commission's recommendations, rejected the Economic Committee's proposal which would have the SPF's local departments independently or with the consent of local Rada executive committees control the list of enterprises subject to privatization.

Parliament decided that the list shall be approved by local Radas upon the SPF's request and rejected all Economic Committee which mandated the transfer of control over privatization from local Radas to local SPF branches.

The Rada also recommended that President Leonid Kuchma to adjust his decrees to the law passed on Wednesday.

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Ukraine: Parliament Endorses National Fuel, Energy Program

WS1605143396 Kiev UKRINFORM in English 1326 GMT 16 May 96

[From the "Current Events" feature]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] On Wednesday, May 15, the Verkhovna Rada [Supreme Council] of Ukraine endorsed the National Program for Developing Ukraine's Fuel/Energy Complex in 1996-2010, which makes the nation's goal to rely primarily on domestically extracted fuels.

As Oleksandr Kozhushko, chairman for fuel/energy complex, transport and communication, said in his speech at the VR's session, the National Program is particularly aimed at stabilizing and improving the coal-mining industry's performance. Its another important objective is to boost domestic extraction of oil and natural gas relying on the Black Sea shelf's resources.

Under the National Program new fuel-fired power plants will be constructed and old ones upgraded. As a result of total electricity will be generated by fuel-fired power plants by the year 2000 with nuclear power plants' share estimated at 40 percent. The remaining 10 percent will be generated by plants relying on alternate sources of energy.

According to Mr. Kozhushko, the National Program's implementation will require 15 quadrillion krb [karbovantsi], of which 2.5 quadrillion krb will be drawn from the national budget's allocations. This year's allocations were stated by the VR Committee chairperson at 474 trillion krb.

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Belarus

Belarus: Delegation Headed by Lukashenka Begins Visit to Moscow

WS1605133796 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 1300 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A Belarusian state delegation headed by President Alyaksandr Lukashenka began its working visit to the Russian Federation today. The agenda of the meeting of the CIS Interstate Council, in which members of the CIS quadripartite agreement — Belarus, Russia, Kazakhstan, and Kygyzstan — have their representatives, addresses the deepening of integration in the economic and humanitarian sectors.

Today, Belarusian President Alyaksandr Lukashenka will meet with the leadership of the Mir Interstate Television and Radio Company, the Rossiya Television and Radio Company, as well as with well-known cultural and art activists.

The Council of Heads of CIS States will meet in Moscow tomorrow. The participants in this meeting will discuss a plan for the development of integration between the CIS member-states. This document envisages the deepening of mutually beneficial cooperation between states in their economic, social, and foreign policies; military building; peace-keeping activities; combating crime, and border protection.

Belarus: Foreign Trade Minister on Economic Relations With Iran

WS1705082796 Minsk BELAPAN in English 0720 GMT 17 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Trade and economic cooperation between Belarus and Iran is taking a new shape -- the countries are considering the possibility to exchange products of Belarusian heavy engineering industry for Iranian oil. The head of the Belarusian Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations (MFER), Mikhail Marynich, informed journalists of that at the May 16 press conference on the visit of a Belarusian delegation to Iran. The delegation, which consisted of MFER and Foreign Ministry officials, visited Iran in order to take part in the grand opening of a new railroad line between Iran and Turkmenistan. The railroad line connected the Persian Gulf states with Middle Asian countries. According to Minister Marynich, 60 countries were represented in the ceremony of opening held on May 13, and Middle Asian countries were represented by their presidents. Apart from participation in the opening of the railroad line, the Belarusian delegation held bilateral negotiations with Iranian officials, including the First Vice President Habibi. On the proposal of the Iranian party, during the negotiations the possibility of the supply of Iranian oil to Belarus was discussed. The same question was discussed during negotiations between First Vice President Habibi and Russian Deputy Prime Minister Aleksey Bolshakov, because Iranian oil may be transported only through the territory of Russia. According to Mikhail Marynich, it is necessary to sign a tripartite agreement between Iran, Belarus, and Russia. Since Iran and Belarus have insufficient financial resources to pay for money transactions, they will organize an exchange of products.

The Iranian party suggested covering a part of the cost of Belarusian machinery, chemical fibers, and fertilizers — the products that are in great demand in Iran — with oil. Mikhail Marynich also said that they had reached an agreement to open an Iranian trade agency in Belarus and a Belarusian one in Iran this year, as well as to exchange visits of businessmen. Representatives of Iranian business circles are expected to come to Belarus in July this year. The visit will be organized by a joint commission. During the visit, the parties are to discuss the establishment by the two countries of a group of enterprises for cellulose production in Belarus (the project is estimated at about $700 million), Iranian businessmen's contribution to the construction of the second line of the Kastsyukovichi group of enterprises for concrete production (the project's value is about $100 million), the possibility to produce chemical fibers in Iran, and other spheres of cooperation. Six or eight weeks after Iranian businessmen come to Belarus, a Belarusian delegation will pay a return visit. The results of the visits will be summed up in the fall this year during the second session of the Iranian-Belarusian Commission for Trade and Economic Cooperation. Answering a question about the scale of defense-oriented products deliveries to Iran, Mr. Marynich said that "the percentage of the deliveries of such products makes zero." Nevertheless, he pointed out that the possibility for Iran to use Belarusian repair bases of military machinery is now being studied. The minister stressed that this is not a violation of any international standards by Belarus, and that he would only welcome such contracts.

Speaking about the prospects for Iranian-Belarusian economic relations, Mikhail Marynich said that Belarus considers Iran to be an immense market for its products rather than an investor.

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Belarus: Belarusian Deputy Views Supsov, Situation

WS1605134496 Poznan WPROST in Polish
19 May 96 p 70

[Interview with Stanislaw Shushkevich, deputy to the Belarusian Supreme Soviet, by Urszula Mikolajczyk; in Minsk, date not given: "Lukashenka's Farm"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Mikolajczyk] Recently, the news from Belarus has not been good.

[Shushkevich] The policy in Belarus is actually determined by the president's entourage. Unfortunately, the president gathered people who are not very wise politically, as well as experienced swindlers who easily accommodate to every situation and applaud every authority. Therefore, we have a lot of absurdities resulting from the lack of education and a low level of culture and awareness on the part of politicians. As for Lukashenka, he basically has the education of a political instructor. For this reason, while making decisions which he considers wise or even great, he does not understand why they do not produce expected results. Unfortunately, everything has recently begun assuming a criminal aspect. Our president, "chosen by the people," — as he himself often likes to emphasize — is building a criminal state similar to some countries in Latin America.

[Mikolajczyk] Is it possible for Lukashenka to change his policy?

[Shushkevich] The president's self-assessment fully corresponds to the intellectual capabilities of Lukashenka and his "team." Therefore, I think that there is only one path — compatible with the constitutional principle of division of power — for parliament: to take a honorable stand. The deputies have so far not done this. Despite so many blatant violations of the Constitution, the [Supreme Soviet] chairman remains passive and does not submit any proposals to the [Supreme Soviet] Presidium, because the omnipresent chaos suits the communists. This chaos allows them to say: "Let us return to the times of the USSR and it will be better." Since the peasant factions are weak, one cannot expect that parliament will soon take a proper position, which is guaranteed to it by the democratic division of power. The only chance to change the arrangement of forces is to hold by-elections. The elections would be held in cities, which do not vote for narrow-minded people. The elections would allow us to normalize the situation, although this surely would not take place immediately. According to the [election] law, they ought to take place, but I do not think that the Supreme Soviet may make a decision to hold them. I am trying to do everything to prompt such a decision.

[Mikolajczyk] After a recent session, when parliament approved all the president's personnel decisions regarding, among other matters, the appointments to the posts of defense minister, interior minister, and KGB chief — despite the fact that the deputies maintained that these decisions violated the law (candidacies were not previously submitted to the Supreme Soviet) — journalists determined that parliament had proved its full subordination to the president.

[Shushkevich] The journalists, unfortunately, are absolutely right. It is necessary, however, to remember one detail — parliament is not subordinated to the president in basic issues, that is, it does not support his policy; at the same time, parliament reacts too slowly to some events, including bandit assaults on journalists following the 1 May rally, when special services took away videocassettes and photographic films from them. Some Supreme Soviet deputies are simply mistaken; many are like the president himself; others are driven by the force of inertia and act according to the herd principle — they do not unite themselves, but follow the herdsman. They value not an idea, but what Lukashenka said. This is why I pin so many hopes on by-elections. In my opinion, to change the situation significantly it is enough to add several sensible deputies to parliament.

[Mikolajczyk] Is society ready for such a choice?

[Shushkevich] City people have gained this understanding earlier. However, until recently they have rejected all authority. Each government was hated since things were becoming worse and worse. However, it cannot be worse than it is now. The authorities behave so stupidly — I underscore: stupidly — that something must be done about this. This is obvious even for university freshmen. And it is they who go out in the streets. This is evidence of a fundamental change in the social mood.

[Mikolajczyk] Under whose leadership? Is there any political force able to unify people and oppose them against Lukashenka and his entourage?

[Shushkevich] Unfortunately, our major political forces that could be able to do this do not adequately realize the current realities. I have repeated many times that a strong opposition without the Belarusian Popular Front [BPF] is not possible, but BPF leadership is also out of question. Many democratic forces will not consent to the BPF dictating the rules. Besides, the recent events testified to the fact that the BPF often takes an incomprehensible stand. For example, Poles in their country may honor the memory of Dudayev with a minute of silence — I understand this. In Belarus, however, a politician who speaks about such things will never obtain support greater than 6-7 percent. We must

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remember that many cousins and friends of Belarusians were killed by Dudayev's militants.

I personally pin great hopes on the Social Democratic Assembly and, to a lesser extent, on the United Civic Party, lead by Stanislaw Bahdankevich — this political movement includes people of high intellectual level, but, for the time being, it does not enjoy much public support. I count on the Social Democratic Assembly and believe that soon there will be other political groups which should take the political lead.

[Mikolajczyk] Young people go out into the streets. Some forecast that in the fall it will be workers who will take to the streets because the economic situation is beginning to be catastrophic.

[Shushkevich] I do not think that these forecasts will prove right. We are eating away the basic reserves, which should be multiplied in a civilized state. We do not multiply them — production decreases, no decisions are made regarding privatization; state property is taken over by structures close to the president and by his henchmen. However, there still are resource to be eaten and sold to Russians. Thus, if someone counts on the fall, I do not share this optimism. In addition, I am in favor of a legally governed state. I opt for every action that could lead to holding by-elections and adopting legislative amendments regarding, for example, local self-government.

As of today, all local authorities are appointed by the president. There are no local councils for calling the executive power to account. Proposals to call someone to account come to the president. But he says that he governs excellently. An he will continue saying so, finding culprits, removing inconvenient people, accusing them of theft, thriftlessness.... All this is not grounded on evidence and takes place without investigation, trials, or parliamentary commissions.

[Mikolajczyk] How may these plans be affected by the 2 April Belarusian-Russian treaty on the creation of a community, which is assessed by many as a step toward liquidating Belarusian sovereignty?

[Shushkevich] I am not afraid of this treaty because it only means greater bureaucracy: new offices, more foreign trips, more piles of documents. In actual fact, it is a concept to recreate the old state economic plan, which will never be implemented. The authority of Lukashenka and the Russian president is too weak to do this.

[Mikolajczyk] But if Zyuganov wins in Russia?

[Shushkevich] Zyuganov, in contrast to Lukashenka, is a very wise man. I follow his speeches closely. He is a man who understands everything well; I do not think that he could pursue a policy not taking into account the arrangement of political forces in Russia. The Communists may amount to 30 percent, but the democrats are no fewer; there is also several percent [support for] nationalists — their opinions about integration processes are different. True, all Russians support the great power idea, but I think that it may be implemented on normal, acceptable principles. In short, Zyuganov's possible victory does not worry me.

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Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan: Senate Ratifies Integration Treaty

LD1305154096 Almaty Kazakh Commercial Television in Russian 1225 GMT 13 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] This was a most productive day for the Senate of the parliament of Kazakhstan. A law was passed to ratify the founding agreement of the Islamic Development Bank, signed in Jeddah as far back as 20 August 1974. This will allow Kazakhstan to receive credits from this bank on preferential terms. It is thought that the first grant will be worth $400,000. The credits will be used mainly for construction work. The draft project for an automobile highway through Central Asia to the Persian Gulf was also worked out with the help of Islamic Development bank. But that lies in the future.

The senators adopted a law to ratify the treaty between Kazakhstan, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, and the Russian Federation to expand integration in economic and humanitarian fields, signed in Moscow on 29 March, which was earlier approved by the lower house of parliament. [passage omitted]

Kazakhstan: Nazarbayev Says Mini-CIS Will Not Expand for Now

LD1605165396 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1623 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 16 (Interfax) — Today's meeting of the four-party Interstate Council of Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan did not discuss admission of new members, Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev told a news conference at the INTERFAX main office in Moscow Thursday [16 May].

The admission of other four CIS states in this club may be discussed only when this treaty is implemented, he said. "We must first see what will come out of the treaty of the four," he said.

Strengthening integration within the CIS is possible only if all of its participants enjoy absolutely equal rights, and their independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity are not endangered, Nazarbayev said. At the same time, he admitted that "other levels of integration" may exist between individual CIS states, for instance Russia and Belarus.

During the transition period endured by Kazakhstan and other newly independent states, the progress of reforms heavily depends on the performance of the executive branch of power and particularly on the president, Nazarbayev said. The head of state should act as a sort of arbiter standing above all branches of power, he said. At the same time, he stressed the need for caution during the transition period in order "not to roll the cart over on the turn."

Kazakhstan: Court Asked To Ban Russian Paper Over Solzhenitsyn Item

LD1305211796 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1320 GMT 13 May 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladimir Akimov]

[FBIS Translated Text] Almaty, 13 May — Kazakhstan's Supreme Court today transferred to the Kazakh capital's Medeuskiy District People's Court an application from the republic's prosecutor-general's office for suspension of the publication and distribution of the Russian newspaper KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in the country.

The application from the prosecutor's office follows an appeal by a group of well-known Kazakh writers, who called for the popular Russian publication to be brought to account for printing "scurrilous fabrications." This was how the Kazakh authors assessed an interview with Russian writer Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, published by the newspaper on 23 April.

The Kazakh prosecutor-general's office shared the Kazakh writers' view and described Solzhenitsyn's statements as "a gross intervention in the internal affairs of an independent state"; "a call for changing the existing order with the use of force"; and "an infringement of Kazakhstan's territorial integrity".

Meanwhile, a large group of Kazakh journalists sent an appeal to the republic's Supreme Court, asking it to retract from the district court the documents relating to the proposed suspension of the publication and distribution of KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in the country. They believe the documents are "contrary to common sense." In a democratic state, which is what Kazakhstan professes to be, the newspaper should not bear responsibility for Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's purely personal views, the authors of the appeal note.

The chairman of the People's Court in Almaty's Medeuskiy District, where KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA's offices and publishers are located, told the ITAR-TASS correspondent today that the case had already been taken on by the court and the hearings were to begin in "one and a half to two weeks."

Kazakhstan: Kazakhstan To Become Major Oil, Gas Producer

LD1605191296 Moscow Interfax in English 1651 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 16 (PIA-Interfax) — Kazakhstan will become a major oil and

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gas producer and exporter in the 21st century, Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev said at a news conference in the Interfax main office Thursday.

Kazakh geologists believe that the mineral resources of the country amount to 30 billion — rather than the 12 billion assumed earlier — tonnes of oil.

Nazarbayev believes that the construction of a Trans-Caspian oil pipeline from Kazakh oil fields to the Russian Black Sea coast will meet the country's export needs until 2010. "This is the cheapest and most efficient project which will enable us to start with export of 10 million tonnes of oil and step it up to 45 million tonnes of oil a year," he said.

The setting up of an international oil consortium in Azerbaijan is a welcome development which will enable to transport up to 10 million tonnes of Kazakh oil a year to Baku, Nazarbayev said.

Almaty is also considering other options of moving its oil to export markets, in particular across the Caspian Sea to Baku, through Iran to the Persian Gulf and through Afghanistan to the Pakistani port of Karachi, Nazarbayev continued.

Kazakhstan wants all CIS member nations to pursue a consistent export policy, he said. Nazarbayev welcomed Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin's call for the setting up of a CIS body, similar to OPEC, in charge of raw commodity export.

Kyrgyzstan

Kyrgyzstan: Kazakh Foreign Policy, Joint Ties Viewed

LD1605221196 Bishkek SLOVO KYRGYZSTANA in Russian 3-4 May 96 p 2, 3

[FBIS Translated Text] Kazakhstan — Open economy, open hearts. A priority trend in Kazakhstan's foreign policy is directed toward the CIS member-states. Moreover, regarding the Commonwealth as a viable entity, Kazakhstan favors the idea of giving the CIS the status of a regional organization.

Working with international organizations is the first priority of Kazakhstan's foreign political activity. It is via the United Nations that Kazakhstan implements its foreign policy ideas and initiatives. Kazakhstan has also joined the International Monetary Fund, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and others. A partnership and cooperation agreement has been signed with the European Union.

In the humanitarian and cultural sphere, Kazakhstan cooperates with UNESCO, under the auspices of which the 150th birthday celebrations of Abay [Kazakh thinker] took place. As for the Asian direction, Kazakh diplomacy is of the opinion that the Asia-Pacific region can occupy a dominant position in the development of the modern world in the next century. Under these conditions it is important, Almaty says, that Kazakhstan should become an indispensable member of the group of states of this region, by actively cooperating with promising partners in this region on a bilateral basis. It is a priority of the country's foreign policy to regard the People's Republic of China as a key partner. Current Sino-Kazakh relations are of a stable nature and have a trend toward further progress.

Solid foundations were laid for the development of bilateral relations with South Korea, Indonesia, and Turkey, and links with India and Pakistan have been strengthened.

As for European countries, Kazakhstan intends to take on the role of their key partner in Central Asia. Talks between the presidents of Kazakhstan and the Federal Republic of Germany, the meeting between President Nursultan Nazarbayev and President Jacques Chirac of France, the visits made by the Czech and Hungarian foreign ministers to Almaty give reason to believe that Kazakhstan regards its relations with the European countries as a strategic area for its foreign policy. Recently, relations with Romania and Poland also intensified considerably.

Bilateral cooperation between our republic and Kazakhstan is characterized by fraternal and friendly relations which have a strong legal basis fixed by treaty. Since relations between Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan were established, more than 40 treaties and agreements covering virtually all spheres of bilateral cooperation have been signed.

Cooperation between the two countries within the frameworks of the tripartite Central Asian inter-state union [including Uzbekistan] and of the quadripartite treaty between Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Belarus, and the Russian Federation is an important factor in the development of bilateral relations in various spheres.

Intensive cooperation within such entities as the CIS, the tripartite regional inter-state union, the Turkic summit, the Economic Cooperation Organization, and the International Conference for the Stable Development of the Aral Sea Region states has shown that our countries' positions on international affairs are fairly similar to one another. During working meetings and consultations, the parties worked out common approaches to such problems of the CIS and the Central Asian region as the military and political situation in Tajikistan and the situation in Afghanistan.

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The two presidents have met one another many times: in Almaty, Tashauz, Bishkek, Nukus, and Dzhambul in 1995, and in Kokchetav in January 1996. These meetings and meetings at the level of heads of government and diplomatic departments were conducive to the further development of Kyrgyz-Kazakh cooperation.

The Kyrgyz Republic and Kazakhstan together concluded seven intergovernmental and interdepartmental agreements in 1995 on trade and economic cooperation, on free trade, on studies of earthquakes and forecasts of seismological threat, on the pharmaceutical industry and health care, and on customs policy.

We consider Kazakhstan to be one of our main trading partners. It is a traditional supplier of ferrous and nonferrous metals, oil products (10 to 30 percent of total oil product imports), coal (95 percent of total imports), and wheat (up to 200,000 tonnes a year). Chemical raw materials (polystyrene, polypropylene, flexible PVC, and other chemical products) of vital importance to our republic's industry are also imported from Kazakhstan.

Kazakhstan is in turn a major exporter [as received] of goods from the Kyrgyz Republic. For instance, more than 40 percent of all our exports are delivered to Kazakh customers. They include more than 1 billion kilowatt-hours [kwh] of electricity, mercury, antimony and its compounds, bars of ferrous and nonferrous metals, goods of the machine-construction industry, electronics, light and food industries. Kazakhstan will remain one of the biggest exporters of our products in the near future.

It also should be noted that Kazakhstan virtually rejected electricity supply from the Kyrgyz Republic in the first six months of 1995, considering three cents for one kwh too high a price to pay while electricity for Kyrgyz customers was one cent [per kwh]. This in turn led to a total cut-off of water supply from the [Kyrgyz] Toktogul reservoir to Kazakhstan. To solve these questions, a protocol on reciprocal water, electricity and coal supplies was signed in 1995 by the governments of the two countries.

Bilateral cultural and humanitarian cooperation continued to develop stably and with dynamism in 1995.

The leadership of the country, the heads of ministries, departments, and voluntary organizations in Kazakhstan provided active support for the [Kyrgyz] Manas epos anniversary celebrations.

A special government resolution was adopted in Kazakhstan to celebrate the 1000th anniversary of the epos. A ceremonial meeting took place in Almaty on 28 July 1995 with an official delegation from the Kyrgyz Republic led by Prime Minister Apas Dzhumagulov taking part. One of the streets of the city of Almaty was renamed Manas Street. A number of prominent figures in the realms of literature and art in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, who have made a major contribution to the development and enrichment of both national cultures and to the strengthening of friendship between the two nations, were given honorific titles and awards of the republics. Among the Kyrgyz people were the folk singer E. Tursunaliyev, the film directors B. Shamshiyev, and T. Okeyev, the writers M. Baydzhiyev and B. Zhakiyev, and the actor S. Kumushaliyeva, who were presented with the ZHALYN [FLAME] magazine's T. Aybergenov International Prize. Among the Kazakhs, the singer R. Rymbayeva, the composer and writer I. Zhakanov, the music teacher [illegible]. Zhilisbayev, the actor D. Zholzhaksynov, and the director A. Mambetov were given honorific titles and awards of Kyrgyzstan.

The Kyrgyz Republic was the first among the CIS states to celebrate Abay's jubilee. President Askar Akayev visited Almaty on 8 August 1995 to deliver a speech during the festivities dedicated to the 150th birthday of Abay Kunanbayev.

An international contest was held in Bishkek among folk singers and Manas readers to commemorate 150th birthday of Abay Kunanbayev and the anniversary of Manas epos. Folk singers and Manas readers from Kazakhstan also participated in this contest and won prizes.

Fraternal and friendly relations are maintained between the Kyrgyz Republic and the Republic of Kazakhstan. Special links based on centuries-old bonds of friendship and fraternity exist between the two countries, which gives reason to believe that relations as allies are being cemented between the Kyrgyz Republic and Kazakhstan.

Cooperation between the two countries within the frameworks of the Central Asian tripartite interstate union and of the quadripartite treaty of Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Belarus, and the Russian Federation is bringing about really favorable conditions for creating a common economic, humanitarian, and information-educational space between the Kyrgyz Republic and Kazakhstan.

Moreover, the nature of current political, economic, and cultural-humanitarian cooperation between the two countries makes it necessary to establish an intergovernmental commission for trade and economic, cultural, and humanitarian cooperation.

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The development of bilateral trade and economic relations calls for the resolution of issues of the establishment of joint ventures (joint-stock companies), direct mutual payments on export-import operations, the irregular supply of certain types of goods to one another, shortcomings in the interstate transport system and in the use of pasture on contiguous territories, reservoirs, quarries, etc. An appropriate legal basis needs to be created to solve these questions.

One of the topical problems that need to be addressed together with Kazakhstan is its use of the water and hydropower resources of the Kyrgyz Republic. As multilateral agreements on the Aral Sea problem are currently under examination, there is a need for Kyrgyzstan to take a principled approach to this problem, taking account of the country's economic interests.

It is advisable to expand humanitarian cooperation by concluding bilateral agreements in such spheres as culture, education, health care, tourism, and sport.

Taking account of the current level of economic cooperation between the two countries, it is also advisable to consider setting up a Kyrgyz Republic Trade Missions in Kazakhstan.

Tajikistan

Tajikistan: Rakhmanov Urges UN To Find Peaceful Settlement

LD1605134796 Dushanbe KHOVAR in Russian 1200 GMT 15 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The information department of the Tajik Foreign Ministry issued a statement on 15 May for domestic and foreign journalists accredited in Tajikistan about the message sent by President Emomali Rakhmanov to UN Security Council Chairman Qin Huasin. In the letter, the president draws the UN Security Council's attention to the emerging trend toward a deterioration of the social and political situation in certain districts of the Republic of Tajikistan because the forces opposed to the constitutional authorities are clearly unwilling to settle existing disputes by peaceful means, in particular, by using the mechanism of the Tajik talks proceeding under UN auspices.

The message says that the armed opposition's irreconcilable wing, which has long terrorized the civilian population of certain districts, including the republic's capital, with bandit sorties, has switched recently to launching active combat operations against government forces in Tavil Dara District, and that this is clearly not without the consent of the Tajik opposition leaders. As a result of these operations, which grossly contradict the terms of the Tehran agreement on an interim cessation of fire and other hostile actions, both sides have sustained casualties and major damage has been inflicted on the economy of the Pamir foothill region.

Considering that whipping up the situation and relying on military might to resolve disputes is known to be a blind alley, the Republic of Tajikistan Government is heeding the appeal by the UN observers' mission in Tajikistan for an immediate cessation of all military operations, and hopes that the irreconcilable wing of the Tajik opposition will react appropriately. Confirming its adherence to a peaceful settlement of the conflict, the government appeals to the UN Security Council to review the situation that is developing in Tajikistan and to help resolve it peacefully.

Tajikistan: Opposition Leaders To Meet UN Envoy in Tehran

LD1605213696 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1350 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Moscow, 16 May — In order to achieve peace and accord in Tajikistan it is necessary to set up a council of national reconciliation, with representatives of the present Dushanbe regime and opposition supporters accounting for 40 percent of the seats each. This was said by Otahon Latifi, chairman of the board of the Coordination Center of the Democratic Forces of Tajikistan [name and title as received] and one of the leaders of the joint opposition, to ITAR-TASS correspondent Boris Zaytsev on the telephone from Tehran today.

Latifi said that the other 20 percent of the seats in the council, which will be set up for a period no longer than two years, might be given to representatives of other ethnic communities: Russian, Uzbek, and others. He added that the council should be set up on a regional basis and take into account the interests of all.

If the sides reach a compromise and sign a political agreement, the opposition will be ready to stop fighting once and for all, Latifi said. Then the opposition forces should gradually be introduced into the Tajik Armed Forces, police, and the Security Ministry. All the illegal armed formations should be disarmed.

Tajik opposition leaders are planning to discuss in detail these and other issues of the inter-Tajik relations in Tehran on 18 May, with Dietrich Merrem, the UN secretary general's special envoy Dietrich Merrem, who arrived in the Iranian capital last night, Latifi said.

The Tajik opposition leaders know that Merrem has thoroughly discussed the problems of settling the situation in Tajikistan with Dushanbe, Moscow, and Ashgabat officials and met other Central Asian leaders, Latifi said. Just before talks with the opposition leadership

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Merrem will have very intensive talks at the Iranian Foreign Ministry, Latifi said.

Tajikistan: Opposition Rebels Fail To Seize Tajikabad

LD1705091296 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0811 GMT 17 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] DUSHANBE May 17 (Itar-Tass) — Tajik government troops repelled the attempt of Islamic opposition rebels to seize the regional centre of Tajikabad, 240 kilometres east of Dushanbe, on Thursday, but have reportedly sustained considerable losses.

Military sources in Dushanbe told Tass on Friday that "the situation at the feet of the Pamir mountains remained complicated, but not critical. The attempt to seize Tajikabad, undertaken yesterday by one of the opposition groupings, was repelled and there are no clashes there at present".

The military sources said there was an unspecified number of wounded among the government troops, but independent sources told Tass that they had sustained "considerable losses".

Several Interior troops were killed on Thursday when the rebels ambushed their car and opened fire at it from grenade launchers in a village close to Tajikabad. The attackers fled to nearby mountains.

The military sources said the situation in another central Tajik region of Tavil Dara was "complicated, but without considerable changes".

They said the government forces were resolute to stop retreating and to push opposition militants from seized territories.

The militants control the regional centre of Tavil Dara, 170 kilometres east of Dushanbe, which they seized last weekend.

Turkmenistan

Turkmenistan: Report on Pakistani President's Talks in Ashgabat

BK1605063396 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 14 May 96 pp 1, 9

[Unattributed report]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] ASHGABAT: President Farooq Ahmad Leghari was accorded a warm welcome when he reached here Monday at the airport along with the Turkmenistan president besides presidents of the other seven member countries of ECO [Economic Cooperation Organization].

It was a unique moment as all the nine presidents of the various member states reached in one plane at Ashgabat airport to express solidarity and close co-operation amongst them.

They flew in from Serak, a bordering town of Iran and Turkmenistan in the territory of Turkmenistan after inaugurating a railway station there.

All the guest presidents including Farooq Leghari, Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani of Afghanistan, Mr Geydar Aliyev of Azerbaijan, Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan, Mr Askar Akayev of Kyrgyzstan, Emomali Rakhmanov of Tajikistan, Mr Suleyman Demirel of Turkey and Mr Islam Karimov of Uzbekistan were presented bouquets and a smart contingent of Turkmen presidential guards presented salute.

A smartly dressed group presented folk songs with traditional dances on the occasion. A long queue comprising ministers, cabinet members and other dignitaries of Turkmenistan was at the airport to receive the guests.

Mashhad-Tajan railway inaugurated: Earlier at Mashhad, President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari, along with other dignitaries from fifty countries, attended the inaugural ceremony of the Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tajan railway here this morning.

The 295-km rail crossing through Iran and Turkmenistan will also pass through 5,898 meters of tunnels.

President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, in his inaugural speech, said the Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tajan railway was a good example of regional cooperation of the Islamic republic of Iran. He said the developments of the early years of the last decade in the 20th century and the emergence of new conditions in the region inspired the Islamic Republic of Iran to play its role as a linking bridge in the region and the world at this important juncture of history.

"Iran has had a reputation since ancient times as a safe and reliable route for passage by rulers, travelers and merchants, and the Silk Road was known as a symbolic bridge between the east and the west."

The Iranian president further said that the expansion of communications roads and railway network, access to world markets and mutually reinforcing and beneficial relations in the region could enhance amity, confidence and trust among the governments and lead to mutual understanding and greater solidarity. Rafsanjani added that these were the reasons which motivated Iran and Turkmenistan to embark on the project.

The president thanked Turkmenistan for its share in completing this project of strategic importance. He

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expressed his special thanks to President Saparmurad Niyazov for his personal interest in the project and personal efforts which he said ensured the railroad project in Turkmenistan on time.

"Recent global developments demonstrate that the world is moving towards greater regional cooperation, sustained and regionally coordinated economic growth and this development will consolidate peace and stability and pave the way for enhancement of international relations."

Besides its commercial and strategic importance, the railway link will cut the distance and the cost to reach international waters. "With this railway in operation, the travel distance will be cut by 900 kilometers," concluded the president.

Leghari-Rafsanjani talks: Earlier, President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari, during his meeting with his Iranian counterpart Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani here Sunday night, briefed him on the situation prevailing in occupied Kashmir in the wake of Indian efforts to stage farcical elections in the held territory to deprive the Kashmiri people of their right to self-determination.

The president also held talks with President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan and exchanged views with him on promoting the existing economic cooperation between the two countries.

The Kazakh president was also briefed on the situation in occupied Kashmir. The two leaders also discussed matters relating to the fourth ECO summit beginning in Ashgabat.

President Leghari also attended a banquet hosted by the Iranian president in honour of the leaders attending the inauguration of the railway project. President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari also visited the shrine of Hazrat Imam Raza (AS).

The presidents of Georgia, Armenia and Pakistan, in separate meetings here Sunday night with President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, praised the completion of the Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tajan rail project.

Pakistan President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari also called for the implementation of other projects, including the Kerman-Zahedan railway.

He hoped that with the help of Iran, the Afghan crisis would be resolved.

The Iranian president further welcomed the implementation of Iran's gas pipeline project in Pakistan and underlined the need to establish peace and tranquillity in the neighboring Afghanistan. [passage omitted]

Turkmenistan: Turkmen, Iranian Presidents Present Two New Projects

LD1605121796 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1531 GMT 15 Mar 96

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Oleg Lukin]

[FBIS Translated Text] Ashgabat, 15 May (ITAR-TASS) — President of Turkmenistan Saparmurad Niyazov and Iranian President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani today took part in the presentation of two new projects — building a fiber-optic communications link and starting construction of a motor road between Ashgabat and Geok-Tepe. The heads of the two neighbor states noted that implementation of these important projects, the construction of which is entrusted to Iraqi [as received] companies, testifies to the strengthening of mutually beneficial economic links between Turkmenistan and Iran.

The Turkmen section of the $21.7 million TransAsian-European fiber-optic communications link, the construction of which has been started by an Iranian telecommunications company, is of great importance in ensuring reliable telephone communications between Turkmenistan and other countries. There will be 700 km on the territory of Turkmenistan. Under the conditions of the contract, the construction of this section of the line should be concluded by the beginning of next year because it is planned then to carry out a readiness check of the entire line, which will cross the territories of 14 states.

A 50-km-long motor road between Ashgabat and Geok-Tepe, the design and construction of which is entrusted to the Iranian firm "Dobral Co" will be an important link in Turkmenistan's road network. Under the contract, the total cost of which is estimated at $47 million, Iranian construction workers will put it into operation in three years' time; the road will help to increase domestic and transit freight traffic.

Saparmurad Niyazov and 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani stated that today Turkmen-Iranian economic relations are more and more concerned with the development of the priority industries of Turkmenistan's economy.

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Armenia

Armenia: Ukraine's Kuchma on Nature of Armenian-Ukrainian Relations

NC1605183496 Yerevan NOYAN TAPAN in English 1403 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] YEREVAN, MAY 16 (NOYAN TAPAN) — Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma met May 15 with the heads of the National Assembly of Armenia, chairmen of the permanent commissions. On the same day Ukrainian President made a statement at the National Assembly of Armenia.

"There is no problem of independence for Ukraine today. Almost five years ago our country made its final choice. I mean independence, people's welfare, building of the democracy". Kuchma said that Ukraine still has to restructure economy, change legislation and bring it in line with the European and international standards. According to Kuchma, the most important task the Ukrainian authorities have to tackle is the adoption of the new Constitution. He added that presidential-parliamentarian form of governance would be the best for the Ukraine. He said this form would ensure balance of all branches of power. "I am confident that the Constitution will simultaneously promote strengthening of power's stability, overcoming of the economic crisis, establishing of a highly efficient economy, and finally, will ensure welfare of our citizens," Kuchma said. "From this point of view I would like the Ukraine to follow Armenia," Kuchma emphasized.

Ukraine's economic problems are mainly conditioned by transition from the centralized and planned economy to the market-oriented one. "On the other hand I have to admit that we'll have to pay an exorbitant price for the delay in implementation of economic reforms, the absence of active and oriented social and economic policies. Economic crisis in Ukraine is much deeper that in countries, which started restructuring of their economies on time. As a result of this, social impact of this restructuring is not so acutely felt in those countries. In the Ukraine we have quite different situation. This fact is used by left-wings for their speculations, although they are responsible for the crisis of the system, they led over 70 years".

Kuchma noted that Ukraine attaches great significance to its relations with other CIS-member countries. "Ukraine is against any attempts to restore the Soviet Empire," Kuchma said. President Kuchma said, that Ukraine's strategic goal is multilateral integration in the European structures. Ukraine is actively extending its cooperation with the OSCE, NATO and the European Union. Ukrainian leadership is also anxious to intensify its participation in such subregional structures as Central European Initiative, Black Sea Economic Cooperation, Visegrad's Group of Four, Barcelona Process. Speaking on outlooks for development of Ukraine-Armenia relations, Leonid Kuchma made an emphasis on economic partnership between the two countries. "We are ready to promote mutual flow of capitals to our economies and implementation of joint investment projects," President said.

Leonid Kuchma also pointed out Ukraine's peace-making efforts in settlement of the conflict in neighboring Moldova. He assured that Ukraine might also play a role of mediator in the settlement of Nagorno Karabakh conflict. "I am ready to invite all parties concerned to Kiev for negotiations. I believe this initiative would promote development of Ukraine-Armenia relations, which are currently acquiring a qualitatively new nature."

Armenia: Consultations on Energy Safety in CIS Take Place in Moscow

NC1605182396 Yerevan NOYAN TAPAN in English 1403 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] YEREVAN, MAY 16 (NOYAN TAPAN). International consultations Energy Safety in the Commonwealth of Independent States took place May 13 in Moscow.

Armenian delegation led by Prime Minister Grant Bagratyan also attended the consultations.

The timeliness and importance of the consultations were conditioned on the one hand by the fact that there is always a potential danger of accident in the energy system, and on the other hand, by the fact that the economic and social situation in CIS is deeply conditioned by energy factor.

Participants of the consultations focused attention on the idea of maintaining and further expansion of the already existing common energy infrastructure.

Describing the conditions of Armenia's thermal energy system, Prime Minister Grant Bagratyan stressed that the major problem Armenia's energy workers have to face is how to maintain thermal energy system. Prime Minister said that further development of energy in Armenia is based on diversification of initial energy sources and energy saving on all stages of energy exchange. By 2000 Armenia plans to increase its energy output up to 9.6 billion kWt/h.

Prime Minister Bagratyan also discussed the problem of nuclear energy, stressing that Armenia's energy program envisages replacement of the Nuclear Power Plant by energetically equal substitutes, restoration of

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energy lines with neighboring countries, as well as establishment of new ones.

During the visit Prime Minister Bagratyan met with his Russian counterpart Viktor Chernomyrdin, Russia's Security Council Chairman Oleg Lobov, Economy Minister Yevgeniy Yasin. The sides discussed economic cooperation as well as issues representing mutual concern.

Armenia: President Leaves for Moscow for CIS Summit

NC1605190396 Yerevan Radio Yerevan International Service in Armenian 1630 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The regular CIS summit will open in Moscow tomorrow [17 May]. Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan left for Moscow today to attend the summit.

In February 1991, ten months before the collapse of the Soviet Union and the formation of the CIS, Ter-Petrosyan, who was then chairman of the Armenian Supreme Council, touching upon the fate of the Soviet Union said that the Soviet peoples would eventually find a harmonious form of cooperation, though not with the same form and size as the Soviet Union. He said: This is how we picture the future of the Soviet Union: a commonwealth of independent states each subject to international law, in which a union government, a common constitution, and a unified economy is precluded.

Tomorrow's Moscow summit is expected to examine support for the economic reforms and the policy of integration. It must be hoped that this time around, too, the summit will unite the democratic forces in view of the important political developments lying ahead. The disruption of equilibrium cannot be tolerated.

Azerbaijan:

Azerbaijan: Aliyev Leaves for Moscow CIS Meeting

NC1605125996 Baku TURAN in English 0835 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baku /16.05.96/ TURAN — Today at 12.00 President Aliyev left for Moscow to participate in the summit of heads of the CIS-member states, which is to take place May 17.

The delegation includes Prime Minister, Foreign Affairs Minister, Deputy Defence Minister as well as other officials.

Azerbaijan: Aliyev Seeks Closer Relations With Russia

LD1605170096 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1520 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW, May 16 (Interfax) — Relations with Russia are the priority of Azerbaijani foreign policy, Azerbaijani President Geydar Aliyev told journalists in Moscow Thursday, after a meeting with Chairman of the Russian Federation Council Yegor Stroyev.

Aliyev expressed the wish that the CIS become more efficient. "Every time we, heads of states, gather together, we make a step forward. I think we are making a step now," he said.

He would not say whether Baku will insist on an extradition of former Azerbaijani president Ayaz Mutalibov.

Stroyev gave a high assessment to Aliyev's role in the Nagorno-Karabakh settlement. "Aliyev stopped the war, making hard concessions. It was a courageous step," said Stroyev.

He believes that the issue concerns not only Russia, but the CIS Interparliamentary Assembly as well.

"This is a bleeding wound, the sooner we heel it together, the better for the peoples," said Stroyev.

He said "the steps being taken by Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeniy Primakov have been supported by both Azerbaijan and Armenia." Aliyev confirmed the statement.

Azerbaijan: Minister, Iranian Official Discuss Trade Relations

LD1605211596 Tehran IRNA in English 2056 GMT 16 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baku, May 16, IRNA — At a meeting here Thursday, the Iranian charge d'affaires to Azerbaijan, Afshar Soleymani, and the Azeri minister of trade, Miri Gambarov exchanged views on ways of expanding trade relations between Iran and Azerbaijan.

At this meeting, list of goods to be exported between two countries were exchanged in order to facilitate bilateral trade transactions.

The proposal for setting up a construction material exhibition on the Azeri soil sponsered by the Iranian northrwestern province of Ardebil was welcomed by Gambarov.

The Azeri trade minister also announced his country's readiness to expand cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran in the area of setting up Iran's permanent

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exhibition in Baku. He termed Iran as a close friend and called for further expansion of trade relations between the two countries.

Iran ranked first as the trade partner of the Republic of Azerbaijan for its exchange of goods worth USD 3,891,000 during the first quarter of the current year.

Georgia

Georgia: Shevardnadze Hails Accord With S. Ossetia as Step to Peace

LD1605120596 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1140 GMT 16 May 96

[By Andrey Shtorkh]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] MOSCOW May 16 (Itar-Tass) — Georgia and its self-styled region of South Ossetia signed a peace memorandum in Moscow on Thursday which could provide a framework for the final political settlement of the over a five-year old conflict between them and which the parties believe can promote peace in other "hot spots" of the Caucasus.

The Memorandum "On measures of ensuring security and strengthening mutual trust between the parties in the Georgian-Ossetian conflict" was signed in the Kremlin after talks between Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze, South Ossetian leader Lyudvig Chibirov, as well as Russian President Boris Yeltsin and president of the Russian republic of North Ossetia Akhsarbek Galazov, who had actually brokered the agreement. North Ossetia and neighbouring South Ossetia are populated by ethnic kin.

The most important point in the memorandum is that the parties refrain from the use of force. They pledge to refrain from any forms of political, economic and other pressure on each other. The memo, however, does not address the core of the conflict which is the South Ossetian claim for independence, rejected by Georgia.

Yeltsin qualified the signing as "a historical event". He said that "it was not the final document, but an important beginning, a memorandum of trust to each other which with the help of further talks can bring the final settlement to the misunderstanding".

The conflict began yet in the times of the former Soviet Union when Tbilisi annulled the autonomous status of South Ossetia which, in turn, declared itself independent.

Fighting erupted between Georgians and Ossetians which was stopped when Russia sent its peacekeepers there.

"For two and a half years injustice reigned in the area of the Georgian-Ossetian border. Russia has fulfilled its mediating role so that the war did not unleash there. The Russian armed forces, representatives of the OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe] and of North Ossetia participated in that", Yeltsin said.

Shevardnadze agreed that the event was of "historical importance" for Georgia and Ossetia and expressed hope that it would set an example for peace in other Caucasian "hot spots" - Chechnya, Abkhazia, Nagorno-Karabakh.

"Today's event is historical not only for the two peoples who are looking for reconciliation, but for the whole Caucasus. This is the first step to peace in the region", he said.

The Georgian leader pledged that he would do everything "so that to create the most favourable conditions for the end of the conflict" with South Ossetia.

"The memorandum is a decision which demands certain courage and decisiveness, and the moods displayed by representatives of Georgia and South Ossetia are the guarantee that we shall come to the final settlement in the near future", Shevardnadze said.

He praised the Russian role in the settlement saying that President Boris Yeltsin "tried from the very first days of the conflict to find a compromise and guided the efforts of all participants in the conflict towards peace".

Shevardnadze was echoed by Galazov who said that the memorandum helps to "eliminate barriers on the way to peace" in the Caucasus in general.

"After the collapse of the Soviet Union the Caucasus suffered most. It was there that the main 'hot spots' erupted - in Chechnya, Nagorno-Karabakh, Ossetia. The Russian peace-keeping role is extremely important in solving the problems as it bears the main burden and President Boris Yeltsin was the main peace-maker", he said.

Galazov reiterated his proposal to the leaders of Russia, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, as well as Russian North Caucasian republics to meet in North Ossetian capital of Vladikavkaz in early June to "finally solve all Caucasian problems".

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